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Near East & South Asia

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Daily Report
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Inter-Arab Affairs

Inter-Arab: Syria Wins 'Compromise' in 'Mild' Condemnation of Iran

MM2506154296 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 25 Jun 96 pp 1, 6

[Report by Ibrahim Humaydi: "Syrian Satisfaction at Decision Not To Condemn Iran Openly"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo — President Hafiz al-Asad returned to Damascus yesterday after extending his stay in Cairo to hold further meetings with President Husni Mubarak and the amir of Bahrain, Shaykh 'Isa Bin-Salman Al Khalifah. Informed sources have confirmed that al-Asad intends to mediate between Bahrain and Iran, pointing out that the Syrian "mediation" was decided at the Bahraini amir's request during the dinner banquet hosted by the Egyptian president in honor of the two Arab leaders, and that the mediation concerns Manama's accusations against Tehran of supporting subversive actions [against] and interference in the internal affairs of the State of Bahrain — which the Iranians deny.

Arab diplomatic sources have told AL-HAYAH that the Syrian delegation's efforts during the meetings secured a decision "not to condemn Iran openly as was originally demanded by a number of Gulf states and Jordan." And that the Arab leaders were able to reach "a compromise" between the Syrian view — which insisted on not mentioning Iran when expressing support for Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates [UAE] in connection with the issue of support for "terrorist actions" and the [Iranian] occupation of the three islands [Tunb al-Kubra, Tunb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa] belonging to the UAE — and the other view demanding that "Iran be condemned for its interference in Bahrain's internal affairs and its support for subversive actions, with a declaration from the Arab leaders of their support for Bahrain against Iran's interference."

The sources added that "a compromise was reached as regards the text of the statement to avoid Iranian alarm at the Syrian stand."

Iranian Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati had held talks with President al-Asad and Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' on this issue. The diplomatic sources said that the text of the statement "proves that Syria is the Arab states' only channel with Iran, and that the Arab-Iranian dialogue should continue to be conducted through Damascus, which eases the Iranians' rigidity on some Arab issues."

Damascus could not obtain stronger support from the Arab states against Turkey because of their eagerness not to harm their relations with Tehran.

High-ranking Arab sources told AL-HAYAH that Syria wanted "clear condemnation of recent Turkish actions and open Arab support for it [Syria] as regards the water issue, military deployments, and the Turkish-Israeli military agreement." The sources added that "the Syrians wanted this to be mentioned as such in the final statement." The sources said that the allocation of a clause in the statement against Turkey is an important precedent, as far as Syria is concerned. In addition to the support it obtained, which is similar to that which it obtained at the Damascus tripartite summit, and the mild condemnation of Iran, Syria also obtained Arab support for adherence to the foundations of the peace process, the Madrid formula, and the land-for-peace principle. Most importantly, it secured "the Arab leaders' demand for Israel's full withdrawal from the Syrian-occupied Golan Heights, namely to the 4 June 1967 lines." [passage omitted]

Islamic Affairs

Islamic Affairs: Tantawi Urges Cooperation Between Muslims, Jews, Christians

LD2506104996 Rome RAI Radio Uno Network in Italian 0600 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] These are important days for the future of peace in the Middle East. [passage omitted] Our correspondent in Cairo, Riccardo Cristiano, interviewed [Shaykh of al-Azhar] [Muhammad Sayyid] Tantawi, the supreme religious authority of Sunni Islam [as heard].

[Begin recording] [Cristiano] Shaykh Tantawi, peace seems in danger again, and many Muslim leaders have proposed a new boycott of Israel to force [Binyamin] Netanyahu [Israeli prime minister] to give back the occupied Arab territories. Are they right?

[Tantawi] Well, Islam does not forbid commercial exchange with other peoples, or competitors from other religions. Logically, the only exception is for people who attack us. However I do not see any link between political problems and commercial exchange.

[Cristiano] Yet Netanyahu has said that the Jews have a historic right over the whole of Palestine.

[Tantawi] This goes to show the craziness of Netanyahu. There are centuries of history which give validity to our claims. I believe it is right to recognize Israel's right to govern part of Palestine, and I really hope that soon the Arabs will have their right recognized to govern the other part.

[Cristiano] If we put Islam and Judaism together, can they help the peace process?

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[Tantawi] All religions originate from a thirst for justice, and therefore for peace. If the three monotheistic religions cooperated in looking for justice, they could work alongside each other to build peace, and to delegitimize violence and terrorism. [end recording]

Political Islam Review: 'AQIDATI 18 Jun

NC2506174796

[FBIS Report] The following is a comprehensive review of all items in the 18 June edition of the Cairo Arabic language newspaper 'AQIDATI that pertain to political Islamic issues.

CONTENTS:

1. Al-Azhar Urged To "Purge" Itself of "Devious" Elements
2. Writer Examines Western View of Fundamentalism
3. Writer Sees United States as "Bitter Enemy"

AL-AZHAR URGED TO "PURGE" ITSELF OF "DEVIOUS" ELEMENTS

Chairman of the 'AQIDATI Board Samir Rajab, in his 300-word article "In Truth I Speak" on page 1, states that "running al-Azhar is undoubtedly the responsibility of the Grand Imam." He therefore concludes that "when a group appoints itself the guardian of al-Azhar...it should be confronted boldly and bravely, particularly since we are well aware of the goals of these people."

He explains that the group he is referring to is the "al-Azhar 'Ulema Front" which, he believes "can never be interested in preserving the interests of Islam and the Muslims." He notes that "such people" have been exposed elsewhere, such as in the engineers', doctors', and lawyers' associations. He stresses that "we are not prepared to jeopardize society just because of some people's devious mentality."

He stresses in conclusion that "purging" al-Azhar is the responsibility of its own personnel, who are urged to act swiftly to set things right.

WRITER EXAMINES WESTERN VIEW OF FUNDAMENTALISM

A 700-word article by Dr. Muhammad Ibrahim al-Fayyumi on page 6 defines the term "fundamentalism" and examines how "the West" uses it in the wrong context to tarnish the image of Islam.

He says "Islam does not know violence or terrorism; it is a creed of tolerance, fraternity, affinity, and compassion that urges cooperation in its most sublime forms." He explains that terrorism is a "sociopolitical" phenomenon sparked by people's living conditions.

Dr. al-Fayyumi points out that the Western media has associated violence and terrorism with Islam and the Muslims, who are seen by the West as "inferior, crude, barbaric, ignorant, aggressive, lustful, usurping, savage, irrational, and frivolous."

He defines "fundamentalism" as "searching for the fundamentals or roots," since nothing can exist without roots. He sees "nothing repulsive" about fundamentalism if we look back at its history in Islam.

Dr. al-Fayyumi believes that the West and the United States are "prepared to make a compact with the devil in order to maintain their interests and their domination of the people and their wealth." This is why the West tends to promote literature that "provides cultural and political falsification...in order to stay in control," al-Fayyumi concludes.

WRITER SEES U.S. AS "BITTER ENEMY"

Majdi Salim's 500-word "God Is Gracious" column on page 10 says that "the American UN Security Council is once again showing its claws and fangs and making threats just because Iraq has exercised its rights on its land and refused to let the inspection committee into two military centers belonging to the Republican Guard." He says that the "venerable" Security Council met on U.S. and British orders to discuss "strict" measures to force Iraq to "yield further."

Salim asks where the Security Council was when Israel was pounding Lebanon and concludes that the United States "cares for no one but Israel".

"We have to understand that what comes out of the United States today about peace and the need to maintain peace is merely a way to put pressure on us in the Arab world to accept the terms of the new Israeli prime minister," he says, noting that the United States does not want the Arabs to get together and adopt a unified stance.

"The consensus by the Arab leaders on attendance at the 22 June Cairo summit confirms that they realize the seriousness of the situation," Salim says, adding that the Arabs will emerge from the summit with a unified position that realizes the hopes of Arab citizens, particularly since they now know that "their enemy" is not Israel alone and that "the party they thought of as a mediator, partner, and arbiter in the peace process is nothing but a bitter enemy."

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Palestinian Affairs

Palestinian Affairs: PA 'Not Encouraged' by Christopher-Netanyahu Meeting

TA2606103796 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Jun 96 p 2

[Report by Jon Immanuel]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Palestinian Authority officials were not encouraged by yesterday's meeting between Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and US Secretary of State Warren Christopher. But PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat will meet with Christopher today in Cairo, before offering his own assessment on Israel's attitude toward peace talks.

The PA believes a meeting between 'Arafat and Netanyahu is essential before any serious talks can begin on the future of the peace process.

Israeli security sources also expect that such a meeting will be necessary before any Israeli redeployment in Hebron.

"We are looking for high-level talks, and that means 'Arafat and Netanyahu," said 'Arafat aide Nabil Abu-Rudaynah.

When it happens, "I am sure the first meeting between Netanyahu and 'Arafat will be difficult, but I am sure it will be less difficult than the first meeting between 'Arafat and Yitzhaq Rabin," said Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, a close adviser to 'Arafat.

Meanwhile, 'Arafat and Christopher will likely be joined in their meeting by Egyptian President Husni Mubarak.

The Palestinians put great store in the declarations of the Arab summit hosted by Mubarak in Cairo last week. "The summit confirmed the Palestinian position, and we are demanding that the Israelis advance the peace process," Abu-Rudaynah said.

He said the PA had heard Israel is preparing a list of alleged Palestinian violations of the Oslo agreements and would demand their rectification before proceeding further in peace talks. The PA has drawn up its own list of Israeli violations to present in response.

"If they have 49 objections, then we have 490, but let's sit down and negotiate," Abu-Rudaynah said.

Government coordinator Maj.-Gen. Oren Shahor met with PA Civil Affairs Minister Jamil al-Tarifi last night and transferred a list of some 20 violations drawn up by Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay. These included issuing Palestinian passports to Jerusalem residents, starting work on a terminal at Rafah airport, and misusing Israeli-authorized VIP travel passes.

Israel's failure to redeploy in Hebron, to release all women prisoners, or open the safe passage between Gaza and the West Bank would head the PA's list of violations, Abu-Rudaynah said.

The security ramifications of a Hebron redeployment are being discussed by the government, two women prisoners were kept in jail because President 'Ezer Weizman refused to amnesty them, and the safe passage accord is almost ready.

Israel is most concerned about the PA's willingness to act against terrorism, its failure to extradite terrorists, and its ambiguous amendment of the Palestinian Covenant. The PA's response is that it is doing all it can on terrorism, it is under no obligation to extradite wanted offenders it has already jailed, and that the covenant was amended according the letters exchanged between 'Arafat and Rabin September 1993.

The first real challenge of the next round of peace talks will come when Israel and the PA sit down to discuss further IDF [Israel Defense Forces] redeployment in area C, which is 70 percent of the West Bank and falls under full Israeli security control. The redeployment from an undefined section of area C is supposed to take place in three stages six months apart, starting in September.

Palestinian Affairs: Al-Husayni Says 'Arafat To Meet With Netanyahu Soon

TA2606104896 Jerusalem THE JERUSALEM POST in English 26 Jun 96 p 1

[Report by Bill Hutman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority President Yasir 'Arafat will likely meet "within a month," because there is no choice if the peace process is to get back on track, Faysal al-Husayni, the senior PLO official in Jerusalem, said yesterday.

"We must start a direct dialogue again" al-Husayni told THE JERUSALEM POST at Orient House, the PLO headquarters in Jerusalem.

"I don't know if Mr. 'Arafat likes Mr. Netanyahu: I don't know whether Mr. 'Arafat likes Mr. Netanyahu," al-Husayni said. "But this is not important. We are talking about politics. And in politics, you can't decide for the other side about his own leadership."

"It is not up to Mr. 'Arafat to accept Mr. Netanyahu, and Mr. Netanyahu to accept Mr. 'Arafat. It is a must (that they accept each other)," he added.

Al-Husayni said he thinks there will be an 'Arafat-Netanyahu meeting in "a matter of weeks. I hope in

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a number of days. But for sure in less than a month. I think that meeting must take place here... Maybe on the border, at Erez for example."

Al-Husayni did not rule out the two leaders meeting abroad. "It would also be good to have it in Washington. But the point is that we start talking again directly. If this means going to Washington, Why not?" he said. "From our side there is no difficulty in taking such a step. It is difficult for Mr. Netanyahu to have such a meeting," al-Husayni said.

On the matter of Orient House, al-Husayni said he does not believe Netanyahu will carry through his threat to close the PLO headquarters. If he did so, PLO operations in Jerusalem would simply be moved elsewhere in the city. Al-Husayni said:

"Every house can be the Orient House. I can have visitors here. If the Israelis will forbid it in this house, the first door I knock on, they will let me in, and we will meet there," al-Husayni said. "Our house is not the building. Our house is the spirit of Jerusalem."

Al-Husayni also categorically denied reports originating in the Prime Minister's Office on Monday that Israel applied pressure on officials at Orient House to cancel a meeting that day involving PA officials. He reiterated that the meeting was moved to another location, because renovation work at Orient House had caused a power outage.

"There is no limit on who we can see in the Orient House," said al-Husayni. However he said he agrees with the government that the peace accords forbid PA activity there and insisted none was taking place.

"It doesn't matter whether the Likud or Labor is in the government. In the end there will be a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital," al-Husayni said.

He also offered a "formula" for peace: "Israel wants full security, and full security means full control, and full control means full authority. Whoever has authority has control. Whoever has control, can give security. If Israel want security, then it must give us full authority and full control, so there can be full security."

Palestinian Affairs: 'Urayqat Urges Negotiations To Begin 'Immediately'

TA2506133296 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 0930 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat, the official in charge of local government in the Palestinian Authority, has stressed the need for Israel and the Palestinians to sit down at the negotiating table immediately and resolve the remaining outstanding issues, which are: Jerusalem, the refugees, delineation of borders, and settlement activity.

Dr. 'Urayqat described last night's remarks by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu to the effect that Jerusalem is the eternal capital of Israel and will never be divided as the equivalent of negotiating through the news media. Dr. 'Urayqat added that the Israeli Government has two options: either continue the peace process and implement the signed agreements in order to extricate the region from the cycle of violence, or behave without honoring international laws and agreements, which would lead to the collapse of the peace process. Dr. 'Urayqat made these remarks in an interview with our correspondent Yasir 'Atilah.

Palestinian Affairs: Quray' on Likud, Summit, Syria, Other Issues

JN2506182596 (Internet) AL-ITTIHAD in Arabic 24 Jun 96

[Report by Sinan Shaqdih in Ramallah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Palestinian Legislative Council Speaker Ahmad Quray', alias Abu-'Ala', raised three Palestinian no's vis-a-vis the three no's announced by the Likud Party in its government's platform.

He said: No peace with Israel unless the Palestinian people in the Diaspora can exercise their rights to repatriation or compensations; no peace without the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, to defining their future, and to establishing an independent state with Jerusalem as its capital; and no peace if a single settler or a stone remain in any Israeli settlement on Palestinian territory. According to Quray', the alternative to these three Palestinian no's is the return to the intifadah and struggle.

During an interview AL-ITTIHAD held with him in his house in the township of Abu Dis near Jerusalem, Quray' said it is possible for the Palestinian side to resort to international arbitration if Israel continues to procrastinate on implementing the agreements. He pointed out that the Israeli community is divided into those who support peace and those who try to foil it.

Quray' called for healing the rift in inter-Arab relations, particularly in the Palestinian-Syrian relationship which, he said, is the most important guarantee vis-a-vis the coming challenges.

Regarding the platform announced by the Likud government, Quray' said: No doubt, the Likud announced, in its platform, a policy that is unacceptable. We absolutely reject this policy. The guidelines announced represent an assassination of the current peace process.

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Their platform said no to Jerusalem; the settlement activity will continue and expand and will not stop; and there will be no Palestinian state. This means that they determined, in advance, the results of the negotiations before their actual start. This cannot be accepted at all because peace is a common interest and is concluded between two sides and not by one side.

Quray' added: When we negotiated and signed agreements with the Israeli side, we said these agreements marked the beginning of confidence building and will enable us to reach the final-status negotiations and work out the appropriate formula for them. However, these agreements fell short of signing a peace treaty. They are only phased agreements which pave the way for a final agreement which could be reached after negotiations.

He said: Despite this, and after it assumed power, the Likud tried to impose solutions we do not accept at all. We, as the Palestinian side, cannot accept anything of this kind, and our position is clear and specific on the Likud's platform.

He added: Any formula for a solution and for peace cannot fall short of the Palestinian people's right to repatriation or compensations in accordance with the UN resolutions. This is because the refugee issue is the root of the Palestine question. This formula cannot be worked out without the Palestinian people's right to self-determination, to defining their future, and to establishing a Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital. Moreover, we do not have to conclude peace with Israel if a single settler remains in the Palestinian territories and if a single stone remains in an Israeli settlement in Palestinian territory.

Regarding the Likud's proposals on Jerusalem, Quray' said that no Palestinian can accept any solution without Jerusalem, and no Arab or Muslim can accept any peace without Jerusalem. He added: There will be no bargaining, or even negotiations, over the Jerusalem issue. Jerusalem is a territory occupied in 1967, and occupation should be removed. Moreover, when we listed the Jerusalem issue in the Declaration of Principles to negotiate on it in the final-status talks, we did not mention East Jerusalem; we only mentioned Jerusalem, including its western part which Israel occupied before 1967.

Quray' added: During the negotiations, we will discuss the Palestinian demands, rights, and lands in western Jerusalem. There are Palestinian lands and property in Beit Safafa, El Qastal, Dayr Yasin [Giv'at Sha'ul], Abu Ghaush, and the al-Sikkah area. These are our rights which we will not relinquish, especially since Israel looks for any meter owned by a Jew in Palestinian territory and negotiates with us on it.

Asked about the requirements stipulated in the Palestinian-Israeli agreement and Israel's procrastination in implementing the agreement, Quray' said: The new government has to honor the agreements that Israel concluded with us. The detainees must be released; redeployment in Hebron must be completed; the issue of electricity in the West Bank must be solved; the issue of Palestinian water rights must be agreed on immediately; Area B, which is under joint Palestinian-Israeli control, must now be transformed into Area A so that it is under Palestinian control; and the transfer of Area C, which is currently under Israeli control, to the Palestinian Authority must begin, particularly since it is stipulated in the agreements that one-third of this area should be placed under the control of the Palestinian Authority by next month.

Moreover, the issue of displaced people must be resolved, because we no longer find it acceptable to spend a year and a half negotiating the definition of a displaced person with them.

Quray' said the Palestinian side can resort to international arbitration if Israel continues to procrastinate in implementing the agreements—something that is stipulated in the Oslo agreement. He said negotiations on the issue of the displaced has taken too long, without any progress being made. Furthermore, he added, withdrawal from the city of Hebron should have taken place on 26 March 1996, which is the date originally set for this purpose. But this date was not respected because Peres refused to carry out the withdrawal and left it to the new government.

Quray' added: The failure to withdraw from Hebron was Peres' mistake. He shirked his responsibilities, even though the Israeli Army chief of staff said that the redeployment process in Hebron will not take more than one day once a political decision is made to this effect.

Regarding the strengths the Palestinian side will use to confront a possible obstruction or termination of the peace process on the part of the new Israeli Government, Quray' said: We are the cause. Peace will never prevail in the region without the resolution of the Palestinian question. Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman and the Qatari amir have clearly stated there will be no diplomatic relations or normalization with Israel if the peace process is abandoned. When our brothers in Oman, Qatar, Morocco, and Tunisia set up representation offices in Israel, they did so on the basis that the peace process is under way. However, if this process does not continue and if Israel abandons it, then our Arab brothers will change their minds about

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establishing any relations with Israel. These are our strengths.

Quray' said: On the subject of the other cards we are holding, I would not want to say that we have nothing to lose. We have been the victims since 1948, and our people have proven to be quite capable of finding other options. Our options are clear. We can always go back to the previous situation. This means we can go back to the intifadah, to fighting, and to struggle. The region will never rest unless there is just peace — one that resolves the Palestinian question fairly and ends the Israeli occupation of the Arab lands.

Quray' wondered: How can Netanyahu imagine that there will be peace while the Golan is occupied? How can he say that keeping the Golan serves Israel's strategic interest and that water resources in the Golan are crucial to the Israelis? What logic is this? If he wants peace, he has to pay the price. But if Netanyahu held negotiations with himself alone, or his government held unilateral negotiations and came up with these results, then this is his problem. But the will to realize peace is a two way-street, and he will never be able to realize peace alone.

Quray' continued: At present, Israel is divided in half. Half of the society voted in favor of peace, and the other half voted against it. Netanyahu won only 50 percent of the vote, and he has to respect the other half.

Regarding the Arab summit in Cairo, Quray' said: We are happy that this summit will be held. Its significance stems from the fact that it is the first Arab summit to be held after the second Gulf war. Its aim is to restore Arab cohesion and solidarity, turning a new leaf, and healing old wounds in order to face the future challenges. He said the summit will address regional developments. The Arab leaders will convey a clear and direct message to the two sponsors of the peace process and tell them that they have to protect this process from any setbacks. The Arab leaders will send a second message with the same form and clarity to the international community, and a third one to the Israeli Government telling it that the Arabs are not weak and that they are a huge force in the region — a fact which everybody takes into account. The summit will also provide the Arab, Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese negotiators with the support they need.

Quray' hoped that during this summit, the rift in inter-Arab relations, specifically in Palestinian-Syrian relations, will be healed. He said: Our relationship with Syria is important and strategic. It is not marginal, and we cannot do without it. Syria and Palestine are fraternal Arab countries and fraternal peoples. Syria is a country that has made and continues to make sacrifices for the Palestine cause. Under its leadership, Syria is pursuing a genuine pan-Arab policy on the Arab situation, particularly the Palestinian situation.

Quray' continued: Palestine and Syria now face a new challenge. The Netanyahu government's declared position on Jerusalem is the same as its declared position on the Golan. Besides the religious, national, and historic ties, which require consultations and coordination, the two sides have a joint interest in confronting the challenges of the next stage. Quray' stressed that the Palestinians wish to restore relations with the brothers in Syria to their previous status, as this is the most important guarantee for facing the coming challenges.

He continued: We have already told the brothers in Syria that we did not sign a peace treaty with Israel, but interim agreements that have been imposed on us. Since we are now at the threshold of the final status negotiations, we are at the same line as they are. I must recall what former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir said. He said he would negotiate with the Palestinians for 10 years at a time when he would build more settlements so as to eventually leave the Palestinians nothing to negotiate about. When we accepted the Oslo agreement, we obtained territory, but not all the Palestinian territory. We obtained rights, but not all of our rights. We did not and will not relinquish one inch of this territory or the right of any Palestinian to live on it with dignity. Currently, I do not see any disagreement between us and Syria. The only difference is that we started the peace process while we were in exile, while now we are negotiating the final status settlement while we are among the sons of our people inside the Palestinian territory.

Regarding the Likud's offer to revive the option of distributing responsibilities in the West Bank and establishing a mini Palestinian state in the Gaza Strip, Quray' said: We do not have any fears that Jordan might participate in such a plan. Jordan is a sisterly country that supports us, without any reservations and without any limits. This plan was previously raised by the Labor Party. It calls for establishing a Palestinian state in Gaza and a tripartite Israeli-Palestinian-Jordanian administration in the West bank. We rejected this absolutely. This is the most dangerous offer that can be made to resolve the Palestinian question. Gaza is not the Palestinian homeland; it is part of it. We categorically reject a Palestinian state in Gaza. Also, we reject a Palestinian state in the West Bank without Gaza. The only solution is the establishment of the Palestinian state and giving all our people in the diaspora the right to repatriation.

Quray' revealed that the Palestinian Legislative Council decided to locate its permanent headquarters in the West

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Bank until it becomes possible to move it to Jerusalem. However, he said, the council will occasionally meet in Gaza.

On why such a decision has been made, Quray' said: The Palestinian fears will continue unless our state is fully specified and unless we enjoy all the elements of sovereignty and independence.

On whether Israel is trying to emphasize the separation of the West Bank from the Gaza Strip by blocking the arrival of the Legislative Council members from Gaza to the West Bank and vice versa, Quray' said: All possibilities are not to be excluded as long as we do not have sovereignty and independence. He who works in politics knows well that no possibility should be excluded.

Quray' added: Recently, the Israeli Government agreed to give Legislative Council members all the required facilities needed for their movements and to respect their immunity and right to move freely and to maintain their dignity.

On the Palestinian Constitution, Quray' said it has been published in the press. He added: All those concerned and citizens should voice their views and present them to the Consultative Council, which will allow two weeks for receiving responses. Afterward, the final draft of the interim Constitution will worded. It will be discussed word by word, clause by clause, and article by article at the Legislative Council. We are supposed to approve it before the end of the current term.

Concluding his remarks, Quray' called on all Palestinian factions, parties, figures and institutions to close their ranks and restore cohesion to the Palestinian stand. He said: We are now at the threshold of a new confrontation. Its ceiling is clear, and our constants are clear. We all have the same demands. There is no disagreement. We should all unite and specify together our national constants. I call on opposition and nonopposition Palestinian factions to participate either indirectly by supporting the Palestinian negotiator by extending advice and information or directly by being at the front lines of negotiations. I wish all Palestinian forces would take part in the negotiations, especially since there is no objection to any opposition faction to participate in the negotiating delegation in order to support it and strengthen it.

Palestinian Affairs: Radio Claims 3 Israelis Killed North of Jericho

JN2606090996 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 0830 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a heroic armed operation north of Jericho in the Palestinian Jordan Valley today, three Zionist soldiers were killed and others were injured. A group of gunmen ambushed an enemy patrol and opened fire on it, killing three soldiers. The enemy imposed a tight siege around the area, while enemy helicopters overflew the area. Journalists were banned access to the area.

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Algeria

Algeria: Authorities Aid Libyan Efforts Against Armed Groups

MM2606093496 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 26 Jun 96 p 1

[Report by Amir Taheri: "Algerian Information Helped Libya To Uncover Armed Cells"]

[FBIS Translated Text] London — Algerian sources confirmed yesterday that secret information supplied by Algerian authorities has helped the Libyan Army to uncover armed fundamentalist groups active in a number of governorates in Libya.

A series of clashes with the armed groups in Libya took place in April and May. They resulted in at least 80 people, among them 30 security men, being killed. And the authorities arrested more than 30 elements from these groups and seized quantities of arms. In one operation, Libyan military helicopters raided a gunmen's hideout deep in the desert. Some 600 foreign workers, mostly Italians, were evacuated from the area before the military operations.

The networks of one of these groups, which the sources say have been "destroyed," had been operating under the name "Supporters of Right" [ansar al-haqq] and had links with fundamentalist groups in a number of Arab states, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Sources in Algeria say that the group which was hit represents only "the tip of the iceberg" in Libya. The sources expect "violent operations to spread rapidly."

The clash with the group in question following the information received prompted Libya to call for setting up a joint committee with Algeria to combat "terrorism." And Colonel al-Qadhdhafi asked Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to study the possibility of making joint Egyptian-Libyan efforts to uproot "terrorism" in the region.

Sources in Algeria say that the Libyan "Supporters of Right" group started as a cell to prepare [tajhiz] the Armed Islamic Group [GIA], which emerged as the largest armed organization in Algeria. Libyan authorities overlooked the activities of these cells at the beginning in the belief that they concerned only Algeria and Egypt. A high-ranking Algerian source says that "Libya is now in a position similar to that in Algeria four years ago: Armed fundamentalist groups are now organized [intazamat] in numerous places, and the same [Algerian] model can be seen there, as there are fighters who have fought in Afghanistan and individuals who have trained in Sudan, Iran, Pakistan, and Afghanistan.

Algeria has kept its cooperation with Libya "to a minimum." However, the Algerian authorities believe that the armed groups' establishment of bases in Libya poses a threat not to Algeria alone, but to Egypt and Tunisia as well.

Algeria: Security Forces Kill 8 Islamists 24 Jun

LD2506184996 Paris Radio France International in French 1730 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Eight armed Islamists were killed yesterday, ten km from Tizi-Ouzou, in an operation carried out by security forces. A ninth man, who is reported to be the leader of the group, was captured, reported the daily newspaper, 'Liberte'.

Algeria: FIS European Supporters Issue Newsletter

MS2406140496 Southall THE ENLIGHTENMENT in English 22 Jun 96

[Newsletter "publicizing the Islamic Struggle in Algeria," published by Islamic Salvation Front "supporters in Europe"; quotation marks as received — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Editorial —

What kind of an army for Algeria of today?

Last week, in an interview to the newspaper "AL HAYAT", Shaykh Ahmed Benaicha, the AIS (Islamic Salvation Army) commander of Western regions, answered a question about the Algerian Army saying:" We are not after the destruction of the military institution which we consider it to belong to the Algerian people, however we are after the removal from its ranks of elements who have misguided it!".

Indeed the Algeria army today as many other institutions, is in an impasse despite those voices in its high command, fewer and fewer in number but still of the same "power weight", who are still saying to those who may still hear them, that the option they chose in January 1991 was the right one and any other way would have been worse! Looking at tragedy of the past five years, people must be asking "what can be worse than this?". There is no doubt about it that those who were in charge of the army had many options in January 91 and took the worst one amongst them all by panic, miscalculation, wrong diagnostic and moreover by an underestimation of the opponent strength and revitalisation ability. People may be saying: "this is an Algerian internal conflict, what would have been the consequences if such wrong decisions were taken against a foreign military power?".

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No movement would have resisted a five years armed confrontation against the Algerian Army if the core of its demand was not fundamentally right. A law of History has stated that the more sacrifice there is for a legitimate demand the more ennobled the later becomes and the more its supporters grow in number. Many people from all spheres, including many superior officers in the Army, have by now come to the see the "eradication doctrine" as an absurdity. The Algerian conflict has never been a purely military one and even if a classical "tangible result" were thought of as possible, this will still translate as a failure into the much "wider register" of the political field.

The bulk of the Algerian Army is not that different from any faithful representative sample of the whole Algerian society. The vote distribution inside this institution has not been different from that produced by the whole society in the legislative elections of December 1991. One may ask as a consequence why is it then that the army and security troops were convey to the bloody confrontation. At the beginning of the confrontation defection from the army and police were counted by hundreds at a time and so was the purge targeting those suspected of being or having sympathy with the Islamic movement. Then technics of "psychological motivation of the troops for combat" started to bear their fruits. It all started with the assassination of the most popular and locally respected old police bureaucrats and moved to cover every segment of the Algerian society with the "help" of the GIA [Islamic Armed Group] communiques. These "technics" reminded people of those used by the French army to "motivate" the new draftees from the metropole for whom the Algerian war was "not their problems". After combats or crossfire with the Mujahidin, the French "psychological service" will go and mutilate the corps of some of the newly draftees, bring in the other new draftees and show them the "barbary of the FLN" [National Liberation Front]. For some this was enough to make animals out of them, ready to go beyond inconceivable limits of barbary.

Concerning Algeria of today, the central question in all this is: "has the army high command which was in charge at the end of 1991, been "professional" enough in its behaviour and decision making or not?". Many observers think it has not. It has completely ignored its then vital mission of "escorting" Algeria through the transition from "an army controlled political life" to that of "a civilian controlled political life". Unfortunately, old reflexes die hard and those in charge of the "escort" saw this mission not noble enough for their status. Without any popular mandate, they unilaterally decided to change the mission to that of "guiding and orienting the convoy", therefore going back to the thirty years old status quo. Algeria was therefore put on a track that should take her from the station of "an army controlled political life" to that of "an army controlled political life", thus turning in circle.

On the other hand, looking at the quality of some of the actual Algerian "political class" whose behaviour and calculations are unfortunately not very different from that of a child after a sweet and only a sweet, except that their fixation is power and leadership, one can at best be very disappointed. The very existence of the risk from such opportunism dictates in fact that the mission of "escort" is still a very much a realistic issue of the hour. Nevertheless its "apolitical" characteristic should be emphasised and its rules well defined by a real consensus.

Algeria is in need of a modern army alert about changes in the "external environment", competent in its strategic choices. An army with the noble mission to ensure the inviolability of the Algerian territory by a constant modernisation of its equipment, methods and organisation, with the objective of bringing to Algeria its "military independence" for its proper defence.

The Algerian army is in need of a real leadership that can uplift itself above the greediness and selfishness of the moment, to the level proper in preventing the real danger for Algeria which is of external origin. The real "external origin" not that overused concept behind which the dictatorship tries to hide in order to oppress and suppress any legitimate demand from the people.

The state of emergency and the violation of Human rights!

Many people who may follow the Algerian situation from outside would not believe that the country is still under the state of emergency since the coup d'Etat of January 1992. Under these conditions, Algeria has become a jungle where only force is allowed to talk. On the ground, the regime's armed "personnel" are under total immunity from any crime against civilians. After more then 70,000 people dead, no one was charged even with the slightest "misconduct". But what the military regime has excelled in its "inhumanity" is towards its captives and prisoners.

In this context news about the jailed FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] leaders are most alarming. No one knows the whereabouts of shaykh Abbassi Madani and Ali Belhadj, or which clan in the army is holding them. The health condition of Dr Abbassi Madani and the psychological torture Shaykh Ali Belhadj has been subjected to, does not presage any good. The respect, the prestige and the love in Allah the FIS leaders enjoy amongst the grassroots is immense such

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that the condition of their captivity, their well-being or mistreatment have become an important parameter in the actual war. For that, it is important to remind the Generals that they are collectively and individually responsible for the FIS leaders well-being including those who may think that a retirement is a safe exit!

Read in the press:

Ready to massacre hundreds!

From the French newspaper "Le Monde" of the 08/06.96 quoting a French secret service officer who was explaining why the reluctance of his service to collaborate with the military regime secret police (S.M.) in the seven Monks affair saying:" How many times, have we transmitted information to them (Algerians) only to hear later on that "la securite militaire algerienne" (the Algerian S.M.) has mounted an operation in a hurry and massacred hundred of persons without even gaining any new information!" No comment!

Egypt

Egypt: 'Arafat Arrives for Talks With Mubarak, Christopher

NC2606090596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0846 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Jun (MENA)—President Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Cairo today, coming from al-'Arish, on a visit to Egypt during which President Muhammad Husni Mubarak will receive him.

During his visit, the Palestinian president will hold talks with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who arrived in Cairo earlier today.

Upon his arrival, Palestinian President 'Arafat commented on recent statements by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu. He said the Israeli prime minister is supposed to adhere to the agreements signed between the two sides. Among these agreements is one that no settlements should be built during the transition period, which has gone on for a very long time.

The Palestinian president was received by Kamal al-Shadhili, minister of state for People's Assembly and Consultative Council Affairs, and Zuhdi al-Qidrah, the ambassador of the State of Palestine in Cairo.

Egypt: Christopher, 'Arafat, Musa Comment on Cairo Meetings

NC2606115596 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In a news conference after his talks with President Mubarak and meeting with Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher announced his country's commitment to continuing the peace process on the bases on which it was established in the Madrid conference. Christopher said the United States seeks to establish a comprehensive peace, but this route is neither short nor easy. Palestinian President 'Arafat reaffirmed the Palestinian side's commitment to agreements reached regarding the peace process. He called on Israel to carry out its pledges and the agreements it signed with the Palestinians. He noted the withdrawal from Hebron, the release of prisoners, opening the crossings between the Palestinian territories, Jordan, and Egypt, and establishing the safe corridor between the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

For his part, 'Amr Musa declared that they insist on the U.S. role.

Egypt: Musa Says Netanyahu's Statement Confirms Egypt's 'Anxiety'

NC2506174996 Cairo MENA in English 1700 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, June 25 (MENA)—The Israeli stance, declared in Israeli Premier Binyamin Netanyahu's statements at his joint press conference with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, confirms the anxiety "we" feel about the future of the peace process, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said in comment on Netanyahu's statements today.

The talk about resuming negotiations without "preconditions" refers to Israel's attempt to throw overboard the principles agreed in Madrid, Musa said adding that such "negative tendency" on the part of Israel will be discussed in detail during President Husni Mubarak's meeting tomorrow with Christopher.

Egypt: Envoy to Israel Slams Israeli Stance on Egyptian Arms

NC2606125896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Egyptian ambassador to Israel Muhammad Basyuni denounced the Israeli Government's media and political campaign against Egypt on the pretext of concluding deals for advanced weapons. In a statement to the "Good Morning, Egypt" program, he stressed that it is important to judge things by the same yardstick. He noted that while Israel possesses surface-to- surface missiles with a range of 1,500 km, it objects to any Arab country possessing any surface-to-surface missiles. He said that President Mubarak's initiative on making the Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction provides an opportunity to achieve security and stability in the region.

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Egypt: Paper Criticizes Israeli Reaction to Cairo Summit

NC2606071596 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0505 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 26 Jun (MENA)—The newspaper AL-AKHBAR expressed its surprise over Israel's reaction to the resolutions of the Arab summit in Cairo. The paper says that at certain points in time, the situation reaches the stage for using a provocative tone. This means that any talk of peace from the new Netanyahu government is about a different kind of peace — a concept of peace different from the one the world understands.

The newspaper wonders in its editorial today: What did the Israeli prime minister expect the Cairo summit to do, other than confirm the bases of the peace march, which is rooted in the Madrid conference decisions? Would it have been logical for the Arabs to agree to Netanyahu's program, he who wants to return the peace process to zero and wants the Arabs to welcome his declared stands and notorious no's?

The newspaper reviews the extremist and strange stands of the Israeli officials regarding the Arab summit. It says that the clear philosophy behind their messages and statements is to confirm that power is the only guarantee for security. This means they have completely retracted from the concepts and constituents of peace.

AL-AKHBAR concludes its editorial saying: The strangest thing in the matter is that some U.S. voices have begun to call on the Arabs to amend their stands, so that they go along with the new developments in Israel.

Egypt: Commentary Calls Arab Summit 'Clear Message' to World

NC2406135896 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1140 GMT 24 Jun 96

[Commentary by Mahmud Marzuq: "The Cairo Summit and the Revival of Joint Arab Action"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The extraordinary Arab summit held in Cairo has fulfilled the hopes of every Arab citizen. We can first say that it has dashed the hopes and wagers of the nation's enemies that the Arabs could not hold a summit to study the dangers threatening them and take the right stands to deal with them.

All political analyses and reports agree the Cairo summit was a symbol of a real and serious desire to revive Arab solidarity and they give credit in this regard to the efforts of Egypt and the fraternal Arab countries. This was underlined in the summit's final communique, which reflected the Arab leaders' understanding of the nature of the challenges surrounding the Arab nation, the threats to pan-Arab security, and the effects of all these on the Arab nation's present and future. This is bound to give a strong impetus to the joint Arab action to remove all the obstacles, overcome the differences that have so far prevented the unification of Arab ranks, and eliminate the factors of estrangement and division.

The Cairo summit and the statements made during it set down for the participants the task of healing the rift and eliminating differences. The summit has achieved Arab reconciliation — which is the cornerstone for the anticipated joint Arab action in the coming period — on the basis of a firm and unshakeable conviction that the Arabs share a common fate and that pan-Arab security is an indivisible whole, since whatever happens in the Arab east will, sooner or later, shake the Arab Maghreb in one way or another.

There was much admiration and appreciation for the huge and constant efforts made by President Mubarak through his intensive contacts and meetings with Arab leaders before and during the summit to close Arab ranks and draw up an Arab strategy for giving impetus to the peace process and achieving peace and stability.

The Arab leaders asserted that the only way to achieve peace is to have a full Israeli withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories—that is, from the Syrian Golan, south Lebanon and western al-Biqa', and the Palestinian territories, foremost of all Arab Jerusalem—and to enable the Palestinian people to exercise their right to self-determination and to establish an independent state with Arab Jerusalem as its capital.

These resolutions of the Cairo Arab summit are undoubtedly a clear message to the whole world that the Arabs are united, capable of overcoming their differences, and are as determined to achieve a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace as they are to protect and defend their rights and use all their resources to serve the nation's interests and fateful issues and defend the achievements already made on the peace tracks.

The resolutions also forced Israel to face its responsibility by emphasizing the importance of peace as a strategic goal that Israel must respect and work toward with all possible means in accordance with the peace agreements and the resolutions of the Madrid conference held at the end of October 1991.

The Cairo Arab summit also demanded the removal of all weapons of mass destruction and the declaration of the Middle East a zone free from these weapons. This can accomplished only after Israel signs the nuclear Non—Proliferation Treaty, because Israel's continued possession of nuclear arms without any international

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controls poses an unacceptable threat to regional security.

Hence, we can say the Arab summit has laid the cornerstone for a new Arab order with its own strategy and objectives stemming from the facts and realities.

We do not deviate from the truth when we assert that the Cairo Arab summit was, in fact, a serious Arab action to form a united front in order to protect peace, reunite the Arab family, accentuate the Arab identity, revive united Arab stands against the dangers facing the Arab world, decide on the proper way to deal with the new world order and the economic blocs — whose views and ways of delaing with the Arabs will be altered if they become convinced that there is an Arab agreement on supreme Arab interests — and finally, ensure that these achievements serve the Arab peoples' hopes.

Egypt: Editorial Calls On Turkey To Review Agreement With Israel

NC2506155196 Cairo AL-AHRAM in Arabic 19 Jun 96 p 11

[Editorial: "Turkey, Israel, and the Arabs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Despite Turkey's assurances that the strategic cooperation agreement it has concluded with Israel is not directed against any Arab country, the consequences of this agreement that have emerged so far, Turkey's escalation of tension with Syria, and its continued attacks on Iraqi territory in pursuit of Turkish Kurdish groups demanding freedom and independence for Turkey's Kurds confirm that the Arab suspicions of the Turkish- Israeli agreement — which is unacceptable to Arab and Islamic countries — are justified.

Turkey has linked itself to the West through its NATO membership and its adherence to that alliance's policies. It is also eagerly seeking to tie itself to the European Union [EU] and thus keep its distance from its Islamic environment and Arab neighbors. But its links to the EU have stopped short of membership because of the Greek stand on this issue and the Turkish economy, which is suffering from inflation and which does not qualify it to join the EU. On the other hand, Turkey has unstable relations with a number of Arab and Islamic countries as a result of its overall stands on issues that concern these countries. The latest stand was the conclusion of a strategic cooperation agreement with Israel, which is occupying Palestinian, Syrian, and Lebanese territory and which is using its military machine to suppress the Palestinian people and commit premeditated and deliberate massacres against civilians in Lebanon.

The fact is that the development of Turkish-Arab relations requires Ankara to review the entire Turkish-Israeli strategic cooperation agreement, because the development of Turkish relations with the Arabs and the Islamic countries could yield immense benefits for Turkey that it could not get through any other regional cooperation.

Egypt: Muslim Brotherhood Defendants Condemn Trial as 'Political'

NC2506185696 Paris AFP in English 1500 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, June 25 (AFP) — Defendants from the fundamentalist Moslem Brotherhood up before a military court on Tuesday [25 June] condemned their trial as "political" and its outcome "predetermined."

The 13 defendants pleaded innocent to charges of "directing the banned Moslem Brotherhood group which aims to overturn the government" in the second session of their trial before Cairo's Supreme Military Court, legal sources said.

The defendants reiterated their refusal of four court-appointed defense lawyers, saying the trial "is political and the judgement that will be given is known beforehand," a source said.

But the judges decided to maintain the court-appointed lawyers, saying it had a right to appoint a defense since the defendants had refused to appoint one of their own.

Among the 13 are Abu-al-'Ula Madi, 'Isam Hashish and Mustafa Raslan, who founded a new political party al-Wasat (Center) soon before their arrest in April with the other defendants.

Al-Wasat, formed by 72 young members of the Brotherhood and two Christians, was refused legal registration by authorities last May.

The military court decided to continue its hearings on Saturday.

Meanwhile, an administrative court met Tuesday to hear an appeal by the Brotherhood against the order by President Husni Mubarak which put its members on military rather than civilian trial.

The court decided to continue consideration of the appeal at a November 26 session.

The Brotherhood, which claims to have abandoned violence and denies links to Moslem militants, has been banned since 1954.

It was tolerated by the government from the mid-1970s until January 1995 when police launched a crackdown

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against its members after President Husni Mubarak accused the movement of being behind militant violence. Mubarak ordered the defendants put before a military tribunal under powers given by emergency laws.

In November, 54 Brotherhood members were given prison sentences of up to five years by a military court and the movement's Cairo headquarters was ordered closed.

Egypt: Iraqi Information Minister Arrives for Ministers' Meeting

NC2506113896 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jun (MENA)—'Abd-al-Ghani 'Abd- al-Ghafur, Iraqi minister of information and culture, arrived in Cairo this afternoon to participate in the Arab information ministers' conference at the Arab League headquarters.

Arriving, the Iraqi information minister expressed his hope that God will help him succeed in serving the nation and raising its status to confront the challenges before it.

Egypt: Syrian Information Minister Calls For Resuming Peace Talks

JN2506170196 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian Information Minister Muhammad Salman arrived in Cairo today. He will lead the Syrian delegation to the meetings of the 29th session of the Arab Information Ministers' Council, which will open at Arab League headquarters tomorrow morning. The minister was received at Cairo International Airport by Egyptian Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif and the Syrian ambassador to Egypt, Dr. 'Isa Darwish.

In an arrival statement, Dr. Salman said: It was through the Arab media that the Arab summit addressed a message to the world, saying that the Arabs adhere to peace as a strategic objective. He added: We call for the resumption of the peace process so that all of us will live in stability and safety. Salman asserted that there can be no security without peace. He congratulated Safwat al-Sharif on the media coverage of the Arab summit.

Speaking to reporters, Dr. Salman said: We, the Arab information ministers, hope to make more efforts and enhance our program of action so as to honestly reflect the resolutions and recommendations of the recent Arab summit.

Egypt: Libyan Information Minister Arrives in Cairo for Meetings

NC2606060396 Cairo MENA in Arabic 2141 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 25 Jun (MENA)—Mrs. Fawziyah Shalabi, Libyan secretary of the General People's Committee for Information, Culture, and Mass Mobilization [name as received] and her accompanying delegation arrived in Cairo this evening to participate in the meetings of the 29th round of the Arab Information Ministers' Council meetings which start tomorrow, Wednesday 26 June, and last for two days. She was received at the airport by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif and members of the staff from the Libyan Embassy in Cairo.

Mrs. Fawziyah Shalabi stated upon arrival that Arab media is considered the voice expressing the issues, aspirations, and ambitions of the Arab nation. She noted that this voice should be present in all the nation's activities and events at various levels.

She added that the convening of the Arab Information Ministers' Council after the Arab summit and the conclusion of the summit meetings with such success, which brought to mind the atmosphere of warm, deep, and true national feelings, confirms the role of the Arab media and increases the responsibility placed on its shoulders to confirm the united national Arab identity.

She expressed her belief that the new stage must be confronted by the Arab media, which must review many of its mechanisms in a way that strengthens and preserves the gains that have been achieved for the Arabs with the summit.

Libya

Libya: Air Force To Hold Maneuvers in Unspecified Coastal Region

LD2506141396 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Provisional General Committee for Defense announces that the Libyan Arab Air Force will be holding military maneuvers with live ammunition for several days involving an enemy dummy landing in a selected region of the Libyan coast, with a view to destroying and defeating it. All types of military aircraft will take part in the maneuvers so as to boost the fighting morale of airmen.

The Provisional General Committee for Defense warns all the population of the region concerned, as well as fishermen and shepherds present, to be careful and vigilant to safeguard their safety. Likewise, the health

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sector and civil defense officials should take all the necessary preparations to face up to any eventuality. The Provisional General Committee for Defense will inform them in time about the region concerned where the maneuvers will be held.

[Issued by] The Provisional General Committee for Defense.

Morocco

Morocco: Rabat Said Unhappy With Egyptian Line on Maghreb Issues

MM2506081096 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 24 Jun 96 p 6

[Report by Muhammad al-Ashhab in Rabat: "Rabat Dissatisfied With Egyptian Diplomacy; Moroccan Disagreements Prevented Coordination During Summit"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Moroccan circles yesterday confirmed that they are unhappy about an Egyptian television news broadcast about the existing borders between the Maghreb states, which stated that "the Western Sahara" is situated to the north of Mauritania and separates it from Morocco.

The report coincides with reports that the working paper presented by Egyptian diplomacy to the Arab foreign ministers included the Western Sahara issue among the Arab world's disputes and would have raised it, were it not for the fact that the Arab diplomats suggested dropping it because the issue had not been included in any Arab meeting's agenda and is part of the United Nations' domain.

In this context, the sources remarked that the Egyptian paper disregarded the issues of Melilla and Ceuta, the two northern Moroccan cities occupied by Spain, despite several recommendations by Arab organizations, in particular the Arab Parliamentary Union, which backs Morocco's demands to extend its sovereignty over the two cities.

It was also remarked that disagreements prevailing in the north African region prevented the coordination of the Maghreb capitals' positions, as was the case in previous conferences. The meetings held on the sidelines showed that relations between the Maghreb states are still affected by the disagreements which emerged after Morocco requested the suspension of the Arab Maghreb Union's institutions because of Algeria's position on developments in the Sahara dispute, and also after disagreements between Morocco and Tunisia surfaced because of Maghreb issues. Many observers thought that efforts to contain these disagreements did not succeed. The Moroccans believe that Algeria's, Tunisia's, and Egypt's preoccupation with the issue of growing Islamic extremist trends gave coordination between these capitals a dimension which is not the one that Rabat is interested in.

Moroccan Prime Minister Dr. Abdellatif Filali, who represented his country at the C-airo summit, said that "despite the difficult circumstances that the Arab nation is going through, one must stick to rational optimism, avoid improvisation, adhere to turning the pages of the painful past, and confidently and assuredly start building an Arab future based on a realistic and level-headed approach." [passage omitted]

Morocco: Filali Calls Summit 'Positive' Move Toward Unification of Ranks

LD2406133896 Rabat MAP in English 1240 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, June 24 (MAP) — Moroccan premier and minister of foreign affairs, Abdellatif Filali, stressed the need for Arab countries to unite efforts to restore Arab solidarity, deeming the conditions required for the restoration of this solidarity not met yet for, he said, divergences still subsist and wounds have not yet been healed. [sentence as received]

In a statement on Sunday [23 June] to MAP bureau in Cairo, the Moroccan premier who represented the kingdom to the Arab summit, said that the unification of Arab ranks needs time and further efforts and it will be achieved in line with Arab countries' endeavors to surmount their problems and their disputes. He termed as a "positive beginning" the Arab summit and hailed the "responsible attitude" of Arab leaders and their eagerness to carry on the peace process.

On Morocco's position regarding the peace process, Abdellatif Filali recalled the kingdom's initiatives towards Israel with the aim to consolidate this process. He affirmed however that the Palestinian issue is the core of the Middle East problem.

In his address to the summit, the Moroccan premier proposed the holding of an ordinary Arab summit to look into negative aspects in Arab relations on the basis of what he described as "a global vision aiming at consolidating the joint Arab action".

He also renewed Morocco's attachment to peace and its opposition to the use of force for settling disputes, saying that what had happened to Kuwait was unacceptable.

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Morocco: Iranian Embassy Denies Supplying Polisario With Vehicles

LD2506133996 Rabat MAP in English 1303 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Rabat, June 25 (MAP) — The Embassy of Iran in Rabat has described as "erroneous" the information alleging that the Iranian Government has decided to supply the Algerian-backed guerilla movement "Polisario [Popular Front for the Liberation of Saquia El Hamra and Rio de Oro]" with 250 to 300 military vehicles.

The embassy "categorically" denied, in a press release, this information saying that "such erroneous news are circulated by those who seek to harm the excellent friendly relations between the two brotherly countries" (Morocco and Iran).

The information was first circulated by a Mauritanian newspaper before being reproduced by a Moroccan daily.

Leaders of the guerilla movement have these past weeks threatend to resume war against Morocco in case the U.N. referendum process is not pursued. The Polisario claims independence of Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony retrieved by Morocco in 1975 under the Madrid accords.

The U.N. is trying since 1992 to organize a referendum in this southern part of Morocco to determine whether it will be incorporated into the kingdom or become independent.

Morocco: Former Defense Minister's Family 'Secretly' Depart

LD2506113796 Paris France-2 Teletext in French 0936 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Three members of the family of General Mohamed Oufkir, the former Moroccan defense minister, left Morocco secretly last week. This was learned Tuesday [25 June] from concurring sources in Paris.

One of the general's daughters, Maria, a cousin of the family and an adopted child aged three, "banned from travelling outside the country", according to Maria, are in Spain and are heading for Paris. Oufkir died in 1972 following a coup bid against Hassan II.

Sudan

Sudan: President al-Bashir Returns From Arab Summit in Cairo

EA2406121996 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Lieutenant General 'Umar Hasan al-Bashir, president of the Republic, yesterday evening [23 June] returned to the country having led a Sudanese delegation to the Arab summit conference in Cairo at the beginning of this week.

In a press statement on his return, Lieutenant General al-Bashir said that the summit, held at the kind invitation of President Husni Mubarak and on the initiative of the leaders of Saudi Arabia, Syria and Egypt, offered a rare opportunity to Arab leaders to congregate. He went on to say the summit was a forum to explore issues of Arab national security, remove friction in Arab relations and the maintenance of security and independence.

He said the summit had decided that all disputes among Arab countries should be resolved by peaceful means and dialogue, without interference in one another's internal problems. The president added that the summit had affirmed the principle of a just and comprehensive peace based on Israel's complete withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories in the Golan Heights and Lebanon. He said it also affirmed the right of the Palestinian people to land on which to institute their state with Jerusalem as its capital. He described the summit as a start to Arab joint action. [passage omitted]

Sudan: Foreign Minister Notes New Phase in al-Bashir, Mubarak Ties

EA2606115596 Khartoum SUNA in French 1615 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum, 26 Jun (date as received) — Foreign Minister 'Ali Osman Muhammad Taha has described the meeting between Presidents al-Bashir and Mubarak during the Arab summit in Cairo on 22 and 23 June as a specific transition in bilateral relations. It paved the way for a new phase in relations. This phase represents the will of the two countries' leaders to end the atmosphere of tension, splits, and confrontation by strengthening relations, and recognizing that pending problems can be solved by frank and fraternal dialogue.

In a report to the National Assembly on the Arab summit, Foreign Minister 'Ali Osman Muhammad Taha added that the next few days will see a follow-up to the Bashir-Mubarak meeting in the form of bilateral meetings by the security, political, and executive authorities of the two countries. The talks are aimed at airing and

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solving issues in the same spirit as the Cairo meeting in a bid to consolidate this rapprochement, to strengthen cooperation, and to control disagreements.

Foreign Minister 'Ali Osman Muhammad Taha said it cannot be said that the Bashir-Mubarak meeting has solved all the problems but it is a landmark, and the two sides have shown their sincere goodwill to overcome tension, and to cooperate to resolve conflicts in the interest of both countries.

The foreign minister, who was one of the members of the Sudanese delegation to the Arab summit, stressed that Sudan's participation was fruitful, and that President al-Bashir's speech at the summit was attentively listened to. The speech focused on three areas: Just peace, reviving Arab solidarity, and setting up a mechanism to implement the results of the summit, Mr. Taha said.

Several bilateral meetings were held on the sidelines of the summit with Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Qatar, Bahrain, Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, and Jordan, the Sudanese foreign minister said. These meetings were in line with Sudanese-Arab bilateral relations. Great political and diplomatic moves will be made during the next phase to consolidate Arab-Sudanese relations and foreign ties, he added.

The summit touched on a joint Arab approach, based on the fact that this joint action is more than ever necessary today, he said. He added that the summit called for strengthening the Arab League, and urged participants to charge Arab foreign ministers with revising plans to amend the Arab League Charter.

Moreover, the Sudanese foreign minister said that the Arab summit concluded positively, and that its results are a basis for resuming the peace dialogue in the next phase. He confirmed that the Arab spirit which prevailed at the summit's ministerial meeting and during the summit itself was, for the first time, positive, and has narrowed the gap concerning the peace process, and recovering occupied territory.

Sudan: Whereabouts of Sudanese Terrorist Still Unknown

MS2506092496 London THE GUARDIAN in English 25 Jun 96 p 12

[Report by Kathy Evans: "Hunt Begins for Terrorists' Backer Evicted by Sudan"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Usamah Bin-Ladin, who organised thousands of Arab volunteers in the Afghan jihad and has been linked to dozens of terrorist incidents, is homeless after being forced to leave his haven in Sudan.

He had been living there for the past three years with his former mojahidin fighters.

According to his spokesman in London, he left Khartoum last month on his own private jet with several wives and children and 20 of his fighters.

Sudanese officials have kept silent about where Mr Bin-Ladin has gone, but Arabic language newspapers have reported sightings of him in London, Ethiopia, Somalia and Afghanistan.

His exit from Sudan has sparked an international alert among security agencies. "There isn't one Western government who wouldn't like to talk to Usamah," said a United States intelligence official in Washington.

Mr Bin-Ladin's departure followed a meeting in Jeddah between President 'Umar al-Bashir of Sudan and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. Sudan has been trying to improve relations with Arab and Western countries since the United Nations imposed sanctions after its failure to hand over three suspects wanted in connection with last year's attempted assassination of the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak.

Sudan was placed on the US state department's list of countries sponsoring terrorism two years ago and has been condemned for sheltering numerous terrorist groups, including those led by Mr Bin- Ladin. In its latest report on global terrorism, the state department identified him as "the financier and provider of logistic support to a number of extremist causes".

Stripped of his Saudi citizenship three years ago, Mr Bin-Ladin is a member of one of the richest families in Saudi Arabia. His family's prominence in Saudi society qualified him for the job of raising money and volunteers for the holy war in Afghanistan against the Moscow backed government of President Mohammed Najibullah.

At the time, the Afghan jihad was supported by the Saudi government. Thousands of Saudis and nationals of other Gulf states were recruited, joining radicals from Egypt, Algeria, Sudan and other Arab countries. Most passed through Mr Bin-Ladin's hands at a reception centre in the Pakistani border town of Peshawar.

Later, when the mojahedin took Kabul and the jihad petered out, Arab and Western security circles became concerned that the war against communism had unwittingly created an army of Arab radicals. Many volunteers-dubbed "the Kabulis" — went on to launch violent campaigns against their own governments.

A number were later jailed in the US for their involvement in the World Trade Centre bombing four years

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ago. Last year the Arab Afghans were said to be behind the bombing of the Egyptian embassy in Islamabad.

Mr Bin-Ladin is said to be travelling on a Sudanese passport under another name. Sources close to him say he has several passports.

US security officials say it is possible he has not left Sudan, or has secretly returned. "We are not crossing Sudan off the list yet," one Arab analysts said he was likely to head for a country torn by civil war, such as Somalia or Afghanistan.

His spokesman in London said he was in danger from groups and governments seeking him. "I'm afraid he might be sold, or handed over to the Americans or Saudis in exchange for money or favours or aid," he said.

Intelligence agencies in Pakistan are said to be hunting for Mr Bin-Ladin, calling on their contacts among the Afghan guerrillas.

Mr Bin-Ladin raised millions of dollars for extremist Afghan leaders such as Gulbuddin Hekmatyar. At the moment, Afghanistan, racked by a three-year civil war, may not be safe for him.

Other Arab sources say he is in Somalia, with the warlord Muhamad Farah Aidid. General Aidid is said to be losing ground to his rivals in the civil war and in need of money to buy weapons and support. In the past, Gen Aidid has been linked with radical groups backed by Iran, Sudan and Mr Bin-Ladin.

Britain acted to pre-empt any request from Mr Bin-Ladin for asylum six months ago by telling him that an exclusion order had been issued against him. Yesterday Foreign Office officials denied reports that he had secretly entered Britain.

As well as supporting several radical Muslim causes Mr Bin-Ladin is a leading member of an extremist group opposed to the Saudi royal family called the Advisory and Reformation Committee. In April four men who confessed to bombing a US military office in Riyadh last November said he was behind the attack.

Sudan: Usamah Bin-Ladin Reportedly Interviewed in London

NC2406201996

[FBIS Report] Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic on 17 June 1996 on pages 25-27 carries a 2,300-word report on an interview with Usamah Bin-Ladin, who was recently expelled from Sudan. The interview, which was conducted by Fayizah Sa'd, allegedly took place in London. The date is not specified.

Introducing the interview, Sa'd describes Bin-Ladin as "the main financier of the fundamentalist terrorist operations" in the Arab world and the world at large. She says she met Bin-Ladin at a luxury villa in Wembley in north London. The villa is guarded by a large number of guards, most of them "Afghan Arabs" and foreigners. She says "reaching him required passing through several secretaries before reaching the last barrier, his private secretary Khalid."

According to Sa'd, Bin-Ladin took the initiative and started talking about himself. He said, "I carry a Sudanese diplomatic passport, using a pseudonym." "My name is Usamah Bin-Ladin. I am 44 years old and I was born in Mecca in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. When the Soviet Union invaded Kabul, I was residing in Turkey, having left the kingdom because of some differences, which I don't like to mention now. I was working in trade. During my stay in Istanbul, I got acquainted with many Iranian merchants who had escaped from Iran at the outbreak of the Iraq-Iran war. During that time, Arab mujahidin started going to Afghanistan with the help of the U.S. CIA, which set up a transit camp in Istanbul. Volunteers stayed in the camp and were then dispatched to Afghanistan."

Bin-Ladin continues that "at that time Afghanistan lacked everything. So I and other merchants agreed to help Afghanistan. We sent everything the state needed. Due to the nature of our work, I and my Iranian friends decided to travel to and stay in Afghanistan. In the beginning, we supplied the mujahidin camps with medicine, food, and weapons. In Pakistan, I got acquainted with three Sudanese, who were members of the National Islamic Front [NIF] led by Hasan al-Turabi. NIF was not in power in Sudan yet. One of the three Sudanese was a young man named al-Tahir, a graduate of the engineering college of Khartoum University. Because he remained jobless for several years, he decided to volunteer for the mujahidin ranks in Afghanistan. Al-Tahir was very bright and polite. He convinced me to invest my funds in Sudanese projects. The al-Bashir-al-Turabi coup then took place in 1989."

Bin-Ladin continues: "At that time, I became well-known among the mujahidin, especially the Arab and Muslim ones. 'Abdallah 'Azzam and two of his sons were killed in a car bomb explosion in Peshawar in October 1989. I felt my life was in danger. With the beginning of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, we mujahidin felt there were attempts to liquidate the symbols of 'Islamic jihad,' especially as the information available to us indicated the Mosad was behind the assassination of Shaykh 'Abdallah 'Azzam, who was a Palestinian."

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At this point, the interviewer picks up the story as follows: "Before Kabul fell to the Afghan mujahidin, Usamah Bin-Ladin visited Sudan in April 1992. This was not his first trip to Sudan. He also visited it in October 1990. He went to Sudan with his three Sudanese friends. From Khartoum airport they took a taxi to the Green Village Hotel. One week later, Usamah Bin-Ladin rented a furnished apartment at 15 Hayy al-'Amarat Street. He and his Sudanese friends began to study projects in which he could invest his money. He visited the ministries of industries, agriculture, and trade. The General Investment Organization was not established yet."

The interviewer adds: "Usamah Bin-Ladin says he possesses a bachelor's degree in engineering. He and his Sudanese friend al-Tahir established a construction company that engaged in building roads, bridges, and houses. A meeting was arranged between him and Hasan al-Turabi, who invited him for lunch at his house. After lunch, al-Turabi told him: We have agreed to give you all the help you need. Accordingly, we have accepted your membership in the NIF. Bin-Ladin paid al-Turabi $5,000 as a membership fees.

"Afterward, Bin-Ladin moved from his apartment in Hayy al-'Amarat to a rented private villa in Hayy al-Riyad, an upscale quarter in the Sudanese capital behind Khartoum airport. The villa consisted of two floors. He used one floor as a private office and the other floor as his living quarters. He imported trucks and tractors from Germany in a deal worth $15 million. On the recommendation of Hasan al-Turabi, the Sudanese Government exempted Bin-Ladin from customs duty on these trucks and tractors."

The interviewer continues: "Relations between Bin-Ladin and Hasan al-Turabi became strong. Many Afghan Arabs started arriving in Sudan from Peshawar. Al-Turabi told him that the Iranian government had entangled the Sudanese regime with these Afghans. After promising financial aid to the Sudanese Government to spend on these Afghans, the Iranian Government reneged on its promise. The Sudanese Government could not foot the bill for these mujahidin, but at the same time it could not expel them. Bin-Ladin understood he was required to pay a sum of money. He gave al-Turabi a $2 million check drawn on the Faysal Islamic Bank."

The interviewer says: "The construction company set up by Bin-Ladin in Sudan carried out a number of projects, the most important of which was the al-Rusayris Dam, the largest in Sudan. It also built and equipped 23 mujahidin training camps. Bin-Ladin refused to take one cent for building these camps. As a gesture of gratitude, Bin-Ladin was awarded without bidding a contract to construct the 500-km al-Tahaddi [defiance] road linking Khartoum with Shandi and 'Atbarah. The cost of the project was estimated at hundreds of millions of dollars. In addition, the Bin-Ladin company constructed the al-Rahad and Kiananah canals. Bin-Ladin and the merchants of al-Turabi's front set up the North Bank in Khartoum. He paid up to $50 million toward the bank's capital. In return he acquired one million feddans of land in Kurdufan and western Sudan which he used for agriculture and to raise cattle."

The interviewer adds: "In 1993, the al-Bashir government requested a loan from Usamah Bin-Ladin, who gave it an $8 million soft-term loan to import wheat in an urgent situation after its silos were empty. At the opening of the Port Sudan new airport, Usamah Bin-Ladin donated $2.5 million." She continues: "Usamah has not attended the Arab-Islamic Popular Conference, which is held annually and attended by all the symbols of the Islamic Resistance, even though he has paid $1 million in contributions to the conference. Usamah Bin-Ladin has more than one residence in Sudan. There is a private villa in Hayy al-Riyad and another more luxurious one in Hayy al-Matar [airport quarter]. He owns a private yacht that is usually anchored at Port Sudan." The interviewer says Bin-Ladin's private doctor is Ayman al-Zawahiri, who worked with him in mujahidin training camps in Peshawar. She adds that Mustafa Hamzah, who is accused of participating in the assassination attempt against President Mubarak in Addis Ababa, is a "close associate" of Bin-Ladin. Hamzah worked in Bin-Ladin's office in Cairo before he escaped to Sudan. Muhammad Shawqi al-Islambuli, the brother of Khalid al-Islambuli, the assassin of Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat, is also a close associate of Bin-Ladin.

Continuing, the interviewer says: "In Yemen, the Yemenis consider Bin-Ladin the main financier of Islamist movements. He has built seven private religious institutes in Lahaj, al-Dali', Abyan, and Aden. He has expressed readiness to build with his own funds the Islamic University in Ta'izz in Yemen. Bin-Ladin has ties with Tariq al-Fadli, the leader of extremist Islamists in Yemen. He also has strong ties with Shaykh 'Abd-al-Majid al-Zandani. He is accused of opening several Islamist extremist camps in Sa'dah. His relations with the Yemeni Government have been tense since it accused him and other Arab mujahidin of being responsible for blowing up oil installations and attacking a hotel in Aden in 1992. Hence, Bin-Ladin has moved the Arab mujahidin from Yemen to Somalia in a move that cost him $3 million."

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The interviewer writes: "Bin-Ladin does not hide his relationship with 'Umar Bakri Muhammad, whom he got to know through a person called Nidal Abu-Dijanah, who is also known as Abu-al-Rida'. Muhammad is a Syrian national. He always accompanies Bin-Ladin, has lived with him in Sudan, and is one of the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in Syria. He escaped from Hamah after the 1982 events. She adds that Bin-Ladin laughs as he plays with his black beard and she quotes him as saying that "he who has funds owns the mujahidin!"

The interviewer asks Bin-Ladin: "The Philippines Government has accused you of financing the Abu-Siyah organization and of setting up extremist cells that were uncovered last year. This resulted in the arrest of several Arab nationals, including Shafiq Ramzi Yusuf, who is accused of blowing up the World Trade Center in New York in 1993." Bin-Ladin answers: "To put it simply, the Bin-Ladin Establishment's aid covers 13 countries, including Albania, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Netherlands, Britain, Romania, Russia, Turkey, Lebanon, Iraq, and some Gulf countries which there is no need to mention." "With a vicious smile on his lips," he adds that "this aid comes in particular from the Human Concern International Society, which was founded in Afghanistan in 1982."

The interviewer then says Bin-Ladin was one of the founders of that society with the help of the Iranian Government and the CIA. But soon afterward other financiers from the Gulf countries joined in. The society's main office is in Stockholm and it has branches around the world, including the al-Musa'adah [Aid] Society in Britain, the al-Najdah [Rescue] Society in Berlin, the Islamic Support Society in Italy, the Muwaffaq Society in Zaw[illegible], and Bayt al-Ansar in Peshawar.

Asked if he owns a big electronic communications network and has access to Internet, Bin-Ladin says, "yes, in order to run my business." Asked if his presence in London is connected to the current investigations in London and Paris and with his role in financing terrorist operations, he laughs and says, "no, I am on a mission for the U.S. Embassy in London." She asks him, "aren't you afraid al-Turabi will hand you over, as he did to Carlos?" He says: "It is possible, but I do not live in Sudan now. I keep moving and I do not stay permanently in any country." He adds: "In general, Sudan needs me more than I need it. I can assure you that my departure from Sudan will inevitably lead to the collapse of the Sudanese economy." Concluding his interview, he says that what is happening in Sudan is "a mixture of religion and organized crime."

Sudan: Relations With Saudi Arabia Said Reason for Bin-Ladin Departure

MM1806093596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 Jun 96 pp 1, 4

[Report by Wahib Muhammad Ghurab: "Sudanese Housing Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Bin-Ladin Left Indefinitely, His Family To Join Him Soon"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Jeddah — A prominent Sudanese official has confirmed that Usamah Bin-Ladin [Saudi businessman accused of financing terrorism] and his group of "Afghan Arabs" have left Sudan "indefinitely." He said Bin-Ladin's family will join him soon. Sharaf-al-Din Banqa, Sudanese housing and engineering affairs minister, who was speaking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT during a stopover in Jeddah while on his way back to Sudan from Istanbul, where he participated in the Habitat conference, said that Bin-Ladin left Sudan five weeks ago. He said Bin-Ladin's departure "was in the interests of Sudan — government and people — and in the interests of Bin-Ladin himself, which is why there was a need for him to leave."

Banqa pointed out that Bin-Ladin left Sudan with his followers who had come from Afghanistan, whose number he declined to specify. He just said: "I have not got the statistics. All I know is they are a mixture of various nationalities." He said Bin-Ladin's family "will join him soon outside Sudan. I know that they are on their way to leave the country."

The Sudanese minister said one of the most important reasons behind Usamah Bin-Ladin's departure is the decision to develop relations with Saudi Arabia. He added that "a dialogue was conducted between Saudi Arabia and Sudan over the obstacles obstructing the course of relations between the two countries. The Bin-Ladin issue was not the focus of the Kingdom's attention, but his presence in Sudan was considered an obstacle to the development of relations between the two countries. Sudan felt that that could harm these relations."

The Sudanese official, who is in charge of the file of Sudanese-Saudi relations, said that Sudan no longer has anything to do with Bin-Ladin since his departure. [passage omitted]

Asked whether Bin-Ladin is in southern Sudan, Banqa said: "As I am very familiar with the matter, I can confirm he has left Sudan. This is the truth. As for the reports about his presence in Sudan, they are merely designed to cause further confusion and intensify the campaign against Sudan in order to isolate it from its brothers." [passage omitted]

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Sudan: High-Level Russian Delegation Visits Sudan

EA2306202296 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Dr. Mustafa Uthman Isma'il, minister of state at the Foreign Ministry, received in his office this morning the Russian ambassador in Khartoum, with whom he discussed the current visit to the country of a Russian delegation, which includes the deputy minister for energy, the deputy foreign minister and President Boris Yeltsin's personal envoy. The Russian delegation will attend the celebrations making the seventh anniversary of the National Salvation Revolution, which will coincide with the start of Sudanese oil extraction operations. During the same meeting, the two sides discussed regional and international issues any ways of promoting bilateral relations.

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Kuwait

Kuwait: Cabinet Condemns Terrorist Bombing in Saudi Arabia

LD2606110896 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] 'Abd-al-'Aziz Dakhil al-Dakhil, minister of state for cabinet affairs, who is acting for the ministers of planning and foreign affairs, has made the following statement:

The [Kuwaiti] Council of Ministers has followed with great concern and indignation the reports of the criminal bombing act which took place yesterday in front of a building of the [Saudi] Ministry of Defense and Aviation in the town of Khubar in the fraternal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, killing and injuring many people.

The State of Kuwaiti reiterates its strong condemnation of this terrorist act which was aimed at harming the stability and the security of the fraternal kingdom, and would like, on this occasion, to convey its sincere condolences to the families of the victims and its wishes for a speedy recovery to the injured.

The State of Kuwait reiterates, however, its belief in the ability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, and his wise government, to take the necessary measures to apprehend and punish the criminals responsible, and its belief that the Kingdom will remain an oasis of stability and peace playing its usual role in the Arab, Islamic, and international scenes in accordance with its principled stances.

Kuwait: Shaykh Sa'd Contacts Saudi Crown Prince on Khubar Bombing

LD2606111596 Kuwait Radio Kuwait in Arabic 1000 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The State of Kuwait has expressed condemnation of the explosion which took place in the town of Khubar in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia yesterday evening, killing and injuring a number of people.

This morning, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah, the heir apparent and prime minister, made a telephone call to his brother 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the Saudi crown prince, first deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, in which he conveyed regrets and the condemnation of his highness the amir to his brother the custodian of the two holy mosques, God preserve both.

In the telephone contact, His Highness Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Salim al-Sabah said that the Kuwaiti amir, government and people condemned this criminal act and reaffirmed their full support and solidarity with sisterly Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia: Interior Ministry Reports Explosion in Khubar City

LD2506214196 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 2131 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 25 Jun (SPA) — An official source at the Ministry of Interior has stated that an explosion took place after 2230 [1930 GMT] in Khubar city, Eastern Province, in front of a building which belongs to the Ministry of Defense and Aviation, and which is inhabited by foreigners. Deaths and injuries have occurred.

Details will be given in a subsequent statement.

Saudi Arabia: Explosion at U.S. Base in Dhahran Reported

JN2606061996 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0400 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A fuel truck has exploded at a U.S. military compound in Saudi Arabia, killing 23 Americans and wounding more than 300 hundred, 105 of them seriously. A U.S. Air Force statement also said 240 of the wounded were treated and released. The explosion occurred at the U.S. military housing complex on the King 'Abd-al-'Aziz Air Base in al-Khubar near Dhahran on Saudi Arabia's east coast.

U.S. officials said the driver or drivers of a vehicle fled after the blast. By this morning, no group had claimed responsibility for the explosion, but U.S. officials said the blast had all the hallmarks of a deliberate bombing.

In Washington, the U.S. President Bill Clinton said the blast appeared to be the work of terrorists. He added those who did the explosion will not go unpunished. Mr. Clinton said an FBI team was on its way to Saudi Arabia to investigate the explosion. On the other hand, State Department Spokesman Glyn Davis said in addition to U.S. forces, there were French, British, and some Saudis in the area. The troops were all from the residual military force left from the 1991 Gulf war.

In London meanwhile, Britain has said no British troops were injured or killed in last night's huge explosion at a military complex in Saudi Arabia. A Ministry of Defense spokesman said there were no British servicemen involved.

Meanwhile, King Fahd of Saudi Arabia has telephoned President Bill Clinton to express his deep concern and

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to offer condolences after the explosion. White House Spokesman Brian Cullin said King Fahd also pledged to dedicate whatever resources the Saudi Arabian Government had to resolve the crisis and assist affected personnel at the facility.

Saudi Arabia: Interior Ministry Provides Casualty Figures for Explosion

LD2606032196 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0307 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 25 Jun [as received] (SPA) — An official source at the Ministry of Interior has stated that in continuation to what was carried [by SPA] on Tuesday evening, 9 Safar 1417, corresponding to 25 June 1996, about the explosion incident which took place in the city of Khubar, Eastern Province, what has been confirmed until the preparation of this report is that the number of dead is 16 people, all Americans, and that the injured are 252 from various nationalities. Some of these are seriously hurt.

Findings of preliminary investigations indicate that the explosion is the result of a booby-trapped car. Security efforts are intensive in order to find the culprits.

Saudi Arabia: Bombing Death Toll Raised to 19; Ministry Offers Award

LD2606123496 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] In a subsequent statement, the Interior Ministry's source added that the number of dead has increased to 19 Americans and the number of injured to 386, among them: 147 Saudis, 118 Bangladeshis, 109 Americans, four Egyptians, two Jordanians, two Indonesians, and two Philippine nationals.

The Interior Ministry of Saudi Arabia has offered a reward of 10 million Saudi riyals to whoever leads or guides the security services of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the arrest of those who planned, perpetrated, participated, or helped in the criminal explosion which took place last night in the town of Khubar in the Eastern Region.

An official source at the Ministry of Interior urged all citizens and loyal residents to cooperate positively with their brothers the security men in this respect.

Saudi Arabia: King Fahd Offers Condolences to Clinton in Phone Call

LD2606030596 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0242 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 25 June (SPA) — King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, has offered his sincerest condolences to His Excellency President Bill Clinton of the United States of America on the death of a number of American friends following tonight's explosion incident in Khubar, Eastern Province. This took place in a telephone call made by the custodian of the two holy mosques to the U.S. President.

During the call the king expressed that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the custodian of the two holy mosques personally share the pain of the terrorism that the families and relatives of the American dead and injured have been put through. This terrorism is rejected by the divine religions which condemn it and do not authorize it as a way of dealing whatever the justifications and reasons are.

On the other hand President Clinton thanked the custodian of the two holy mosques for his condolences. He praised the profound relations between the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United States of America and the friendship between the two peoples.

Saudi Arabia: Crown Prince Receives Condolence Call From Bahraini Prince

LD2606014296 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 0111 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Jeddah, 25 Jun (SPA) — HRH Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, the crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, received a telephone call tonight from his brother His Highness Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah, crown prince and commander-in-chief of the Bahrain Defense Forces, in which he expressed his condemnation and denunciation of this evening's explosion incident in Khubar, Eastern Province.

Bahrain's crown prince stressed that such acts of terrorism would not discredit or belittle the security and stability which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia enjoys.

The crown prince expressed to his brother Shaykh Hamad Bin-'Isa Al Khalifah his thanks and appreciation for the genuine, noble, and cordial feelings he showed towards the government and people of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, wishing Bahrain more security and stability.

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Saudi Arabia: Cabinet Welcomes Cairo Summit Resolutions

LD2506160396 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 2230 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The Council of Ministers under the chairmanship of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, has been briefed on the outcome of the Arab summit conference which was held in Cairo on 22 and 23 June. The briefing was made by His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, crown prince, deputy prime minister, and commander of the National Guard, and head of the delegation of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia who also briefed the council on his meetings with Arab leaders who had taken part in the summit.

The custodian of the two holy mosques hailed the successful efforts made by His Royal Highness Prince 'Abdallah Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz as a positive contribution that had served the Arab nation's interest.

The council expressed great satisfaction with the positive outcome of the summit and reiterated the firm position of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on the need to continue with the process of looking for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East, resume negotiations at all tracks within the framework of the agreement reached by the international community in The Madrid Conference in accordance with the UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425 and the land-for-peace principle: A peace which would only be achieved with Israel's withdrawal from all occupied territories, including Arab Jerusalem, the Golan Heights to the borders before 5 June 1967, southern Lebanon and its Western al-Biqa' and its readiness to allow the Palestinian people to exercise its right to self-determination and set up its independent state.

The above statement was made following the meeting of the Council of Ministers which was chaired by King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, the custodian of the two holy mosques, at Salam Palace in Jeddah this evening.

Following the meeting, Dr. Fu'ad Bin-'Abd-al-Salam al-Farisi, the minister of information, pointed out in a statement to the Saudi Press Agency, SPA, that the custodian of the two holy mosques had reiterated the kingdom's interest in the problem of Jerusalem and stressed that a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East would not be reached without an agreement on the problem of Jerusalem and the problem of the Palestinian refugees and their right to return in accordance with international law and the UN resolutions.

Furthermore, the Council of Ministers urged an end to the Israeli settlement activities in the occupied Syrian Golan and in the occupied Palestinian territories, particularly in Jerusalem, as well as the removal of the settlements. In this respect, the Council of Minister reiterated the kingdom's categorical rejection of any move aiming at changing the Arab character of Jerusalem and its legal position.

The minister of information added that the custodian of the two holy mosques had reiterated that Arab countries' commitment to the peace process and their aspiration for a just and comprehensive peace were a strategic choice and a strategic aim which could only be achieved through the framework of international resolutions and Israel's reciprocal commitment by showing a serious inclination to continue the peace process with the aim of recognizing rights and returning occupied territories in such a way that would guarantee a balanced and reciprocally equal peace to all states in the region.

The custodian of the two holy mosques urged the international community, in particular the cosponsers of the peace process, to make sure that Israel would not infringe upon the principles of the peace process and would comply with its commitments on the transitional period and on the negotiations which should be held during this period.

He also urged the international community to continue its political and economic support for the Palestinian people and bring pressure to bear in order end the Israeli siege.

Furthermore, Dr Farisi pointed out that the Council of Ministers had welcomed the assertions made by Arab leaders at the Cairo summit on their determination to forge an Arab solidarity as the correct way of promoting the Arab joint action.

The Council of Minister meeting, which was held under the chairmanship of the custodian of the two holy mosques this evening, reiterated, however, the need for this solidarity to be based upon the fundamental pillars of the Arab order, i.e. respect for each country's sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity as well as its natural and economic resources, non-interference in each other's internal affairs, resolving bilateral problems through peaceful means, non-use of force and/or the threat to use force to solve disputes, and respect for the UN Charter and the Arab League Charter and any other treaties signed within their framework.

In this respect the Council of Ministers reiterated the kingdom's determination to boost the Arab League and its role and bolster jointly with the rest of fraternal Arab countries the Arab joint economic action in such a way

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that would serve the Arab nation's higher interests and help it achieve parity with foreign partners within the context of the current world economic order.

Dr Farisi also added that the custodian of the two holy mosques had reviewed the development of the situation in the Arab, Islamic, and international scenes. In this respect, he, may God protect him, reiterated the kingdom's firm position on the need for the international community to find radical solutions to certain issues which the king thought warranted international joint action.

The beloved king also touched upon the situation in Bosnia and said that a real implementation of the Dayton agreement should put an end to the current conflict in Bosnia and stop the Serb aggressors from carrying out further atrocities against Bosnia's Muslim population.

The minister of information concluded his statement by saying that the Council of Ministers discussed afterwards points on its agenda and took the necessary decisions.

United Arab Emirates

UAE: Zayid Cables Condolences to King Fahd, Clinton on Blast

JN2606102996 Abu Dhabi United Arab Emirates Radio Network in Arabic 0930 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan, president of the state, sent a cable to his brother King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud of Saudi Arabia, custodian of the two holy mosques, in which he expressed his heartfelt condolences on the explosion that took place in al-Khubar last night. His highness expressed his condemnation of this criminal act which targeted secure and innocent people.

His Highness Shaykh Maktum Bin-Rashid Al Maktum, vice president, prime minister, and ruler of Dubai, also sent a similar cable of condolences to the custodian of the two holy mosques.

His Highness Shaykh Zayid Bin-Sultan Al Nuhayyan sent a cable to His Excellency U.S. President Bill Clinton in which he expressed his heartfelt condolences on the explosion that occurred in al-Khubar, in the eastern part of sisterly Saudi Arabia last night.

His Highness Shaykh Maktum Bin-Rashid Al Maktum sent a similar cable to his Excellency President Bill Clinton.

Yemen

Yemen: Salih on Saudi Arabia, Eritrea, Domestic Issues

MM2406160096 London AL-QUDS AL-'ARABI in Arabic 21 Jun 96 p 6

[Interview with Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih by 'Abd-al-Bari 'Atwan in Sanaa; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Your Excellency, because the entire country has been preoccupied with the Hadhramaut incidents and what happened in al-Mukalla in particular, some people are saying that the government mishandled the situation and that it was not necessary to open fire and interfere in that way. What is your view, how did it happen, and to what extent was there a foreign element in the incidents?

[Salih] The Hadhramaut incidents are like any incidents which occur anywhere in any country, in any quarter or governorate. They could occur in Sanaa as in Hadhramaut and in Shabwah as in Ibb, but those who had betrayed the homeland, declared secession, and rebelled against legitimacy magnified the incident. As is well known, some of the secessionist leaders come from that governorate, and they are now abroad. So they exaggerated the incident in the media. The truth is that the incident is purely a criminal case not a political one. If any mistake was committed it was the failure of the local authority to settle it decisively at the beginning when the matter arose. It should have done so from the beginning through the judiciary, but the judiciary and the prosecution were late in taking action and that was exploited and highlighted in the media by the secessionist elements. The interior minister went to examine the facts with the attorney general. I had issued instructions that if citizens wished to stage a demonstration or a march to express their views, they should be allowed to do so provided they seek a permit and provided that its course, slogans, and timing are specified according to the Constitution and the current laws. I also ordered that the security forces should provide the necessary protection for the march or demonstration to ensure public safety and protect private and public property. But a chaotic and haphazard procession was staged. Some elements which infiltrated the demonstrators' ranks carried out acts of riot and anarchy at the entrance to the Central Bank and on the way to the governorate [headquarters] and the public prosecutor's office. As a result fire was opened, but we dealt with the situation and the wounded were given treatment. Two of them were sent abroad for treatment at the government's expense. The riot instigators were arrested and interrogated and indeed it transpired that they were driven to it by some

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secessionist elements. Despite that, we released them, and the prosecution official who allegedly used abusive language was referred to justice for interrogation. If proven guilty, the necessary legal measures will be taken against him.

['Atwan] Brother President, have you not noticed that there has recently been an increase in incidents of kidnapping because of disputes over land, and kidnapping of foreigners?

[Salih] We have a proverb which says that "a hanged person is only left with his tongue." Someone who lost the war and sought secession and partition of Yemen is bound to exploit any incident however minor and to do anything that runs counter to the traditions, customs, and genuine character of our people such as exploding dynamite or kidnapping foreigners to undermine tourism or to blackmail. But that can never cause any problem because our people are great. We, however, tackle such incidents promptly.

['Atwan] Speaking of secession, the opposition abroad is saying that there must be national reconciliation but the government is apparently determined to bring to trial the 16 figures who were involved in the secession and has so far refused to pardon them. Some people believe that such a pardon could be a prelude to a general reconciliation.

[Salih] They are entitled to say that. First of all, we did declare a general amnesty for all those who had participated in and planned the secession and war. A large number of people who had been misled, including members of the Armed Forces and security forces as well as political figures, have returned to the homeland and resumed their work in the civil service, the Armed Forces, or the security force. They are getting all their rights and they are now participants in all aspects of work. The only exceptions are the 16 listed in the general bill of indictment. They will be put on trial. They must face trial, and their trial will begin soon, God willing.

['Atwan] Within two months?

[Salih] I understand that preparations are under way, and the prosecution will announce the trial date soon.

['Atwan] Will they, for example, be allowed defense?

[Salih] They will have the right of defense and a fair trial in accordance with the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen and the current law. Our judiciary is independent.

['Atwan] Will the trial be broadcast?

[Salih] The trial proceedings will be public except for details on which the court might decide otherwise.

['Atwan] Brother President, the fifth round of talks on the demarcation of the Yemeni-Saudi borders ended a few days ago, but it is noticeable that these committees have not agreed on tangible steps although five meetings have already been held. Could you give us any information you might have on the results and the differences between you and Saudi Arabia on this matter?

[Salih] There are no differences between us and Saudi Arabia. At the personal level, I have cordial relations with King Fahd, Crown Prince 'Abdallah, Prince Sultan, and the other princes. As far as issues pertaining to relations between the two fraternal countries are concerned, any differences regarding some aspects would be a natural thing. We are two neighboring countries and our dispute was over the border problem for which working committees have been formed in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed between the two countries the Ramadan before last. But they are proceeding slowly. Our view is that we wish they would proceed better, particularly as in the past Yemen had reservations about the al-Ta'if treaty and its appendixes. The brothers in the [Saudi] Kingdom had asked us to announce our acceptance of it in some form of declaration or statement. That was especially the case when the homeland was divided. We told them that once the homeland was united we would make a decision on the treaty. When the homeland was united and in accordance with the higher interests of Yemen and in the interest of good-neighborliness and fraternal relations, and in view of the interacting and interwoven interests with the Kingdom, the memorandum of understanding was signed on the basis of commitment to the al-Ta'if treaty which is an integral whole and neither they nor us can take what we like in it and leave out what we or they do not like. Regrettably, however, some small organs or some advisers to the Kingdom's leadership are trying to give advice against the treaty which is a single integral unit. We are committed to the al-Ta'if treaty and to the memorandum of understanding and we have told the brothers in Saudi Arabia that we are ready for a quick settlement of the border issue in a manner satisfactory to Yemen and to Saudi Arabia. It is not a question of historic rights or a fait accompli, because there must be solutions satisfactory to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, solutions that the present and future generations in Yemen and Saudi Arabia would accept and safeguard. Clearly, the brothers in the Kingdom are satisfied with the work of the committees but I personally am not satisfied because I want the committees to be serious. For instance, we are discussing renewal of the border landmarks included in the al-Ta'if treaty, stretching from the Red Sea to the Tha'r mountain. The disagreement is over two points. They say that they have discussed 50 points, but there must be a starting point

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from which to move on to the other points. We are governed by the treaty and its appendixes and we should not depart from them. We hope this matter of the starting point will be resolved because once that is done the other points will be resolved all the way to the Tha'r mountain, and then the remainder from the Tha'r mountain to the end of the border between the two countries will be discussed. We wish matters could be hurried up. As we have said for the second and third times, we are not insisting on historical rights and do not accept the fait accompli because that will not be preserved by the present and future generations.

['Atwan] Could you explain Yemen's historic and absolute right?

[Salih] It is well known. It is not unknown to Yemen or the Kingdom.

['Atwan] You have mentioned selectivity in relation to the al-Ta'if agreement. What were you hoping for?

[Salih] For instance, the al-Ta'if treaty talks about nonacceptance in either of the two countries of forces that are hostile or opposed to the other, because that would constitute a hostile act. Anyone who carries out a hostile action against the Kingdom, for instance, should be handed over to the Kingdom by Yemen, and vice versa. That was emphasized in the treaty and it was partly implemented before the Yemeni revolution. The brothers in the Kingdom adhered to it when a member of the nationalist movement, the great struggler Muhammad 'Abdallah al-Fasil, escaped to Saudi Arabia from the imam [of Yemen]. He was returned to Yemen from the Kingdom in accordance with the treaty. But the brothers in the Kingdom told me when I was on a visit there that these [the present absconding Yemenis] are forces that are fleeing, we guarantee that they are refugees, we guarantee their right to live, and we guarantee that they will not carry out any political activities, in the context of the special relations between the two countries. But it has recently been noticed that they have been carrying out hostile activities and have been moving and traveling to a number of foreign countries and are active in the press and in issuing bulletins. These things do not affect us but they do affect the cordial fraternal relations between the two fraternal countries. We say that those secessionist traitors will never be able to affect us, because they were not able to achieve anything in the homeland even with their missiles, tanks, and aircraft. Exploding a stick of dynamite or faxing or issuing a bulletin is not going to affect us but, as I have said, it results in distrust between us and the [Saudi] brothers. We hope that this will disappear and that nothing will happen to undermine relations between Yemen and the Kingdom. As far as our people are concerned, those secessionist traitors are now on the rubbish heap of history. Wherever they are they remain traitors and mercenaries like others before them. They are now rearranging their affairs and building up their financial deposits in foreign banks and are buying villas and buildings. What do you expect from a mercenary who betrayed the homeland, attacked his own people, and sought partition of the homeland, other than abominable abuse through some bulletin or leaflet?

['Atwan] Under the memorandum of understanding it was hoped that the Yemeni workers would return to Saudi Arabia. Has that been achieved?

[Salih] That is one of the points under the al-Ta'if treaty.

['Atwan] One of the things being reiterated abroad, especially by the opposition, is that the government has forfeited Hanish whereas the Yemeni forces had stood very firm in al-'Anad and were able to liberate al-'Anad which was a major well-armed and fortified base compared to Hanish, which the Yemeni forces failed to regain even though there were no forces there. What is your answer to that?

[Salih] Hanish was an exceptional case. The brothers in Eritrea did what they did in occupying Hanish al-Kubra and attacking the small garrison. We have examined all aspects of that matter and are sure that that problem was created to make a pincer movement against Yemen as part of a design to drown Yemen in the Red Sea in the context of the plots Yemen has faced, plots against its revolution, unity, security, and stability. Because it is a sensitive area and because of the island's proximity to the international waters and in order not to endanger international shipping, we avoided using military force although the island could have been regained immediately. We opted for the method of seeking a peaceful solution particularly as we have a great wealth of documents proving that Hanish al-Kubra is a Yemeni island. In view of the international changes, the era of heroics, bragging, and flexing of muscles is over and we have preferred to resort to peaceful means to recover Hanish Island, because we are sure of our documents and our just cause. If the matter was imposed on us and there was no international justice and no international community shouldering its responsibilities in deterring the aggressor, we would regain Hanish in the way it should be regained.

['Atwan] Brother President, do you believe that acceptance of the French mediation will prevent Eritrea from occupying other islands?

[Salih] I do not believe that Eritrea will encroach upon other islands.

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['Atwan] You have no fears about that?

[Salih] Any encroachment would mean an end to the mediation and would mean new tension, threats to shipping in the Red Sea, etc.

['Atwan] How much Arab support has Yemen got on this issue?

[Salih] We have had political and popular support from the entire Arab homeland. There has also been as much international support for the Hanish cause as there has been Arab political support.

['Atwan] We have heard that some Arab states have supported Eritrea's occupation of Hanish to put pressure on Yemen.

[Salih] We have no documents to prove that, other than what has been reported in the press.

['Atwan] How supportive to Yemen was the Egyptian position on the Hanish issue, and how much understanding did it reflect of the issue?

[Salih] Our constant meetings with the brothers in Egypt showed us that the Egyptian position is very good and very enthusiastic about this matter. As you know, the Egyptian brothers played the part of mediator, while aware of Yemen's right to Hanish Island, just like Ethiopia. They acted as mediators and it was a good role in calming the situation until agreement was reached on the French mediation.

['Atwan] Brother President, we believe that the Eritrean move took you by surprise. Do you not believe that there are foreign powers behind Eritrea in that respect?

[Salih] We were surprised by the position taken by the Eritrean brothers despite the special and good relations with them, but we believe that there are those who encourage them and push them into that position to drag Yemen into a problem with Eritrea to be followed by foreign media claims that Yemen, having emerged triumphant from its war against the secessionists, has now grown rash, has struck at Hanish Island, and its forces have clashed with the Eritreans, exposing international shipping to threat and danger.

['Atwan] Is there an Israeli role on the stage?

[Salih] According to some information there are Israeli experts on the Dahlak islands and there is an observation station, and the Eritrean naval forces have received boats from Israel. It is not unlikely that Israel and other major international powers do not want the Red Sea Arabized and want other forces to be present. The Eritrean people (Muslims and Christians) are fraternal people and we have no problem on that score, but there seems to be an intention to strengthen that party and to have an outlet for the forces that are in Eritrea and also that were in Ethiopia when Ethiopia and Eritrea were one state, forces which were there in the days of Haile Selassie and Mengistu Haile Mariam. The Israelis will not leave Ethiopia and Eritrea. Furthermore, after the end of the Cold War, the U.S. presence in Ethiopia and Eritrea returned to what it was before the Soviets went to Ethiopia. The best proof is the U.S. Air Force presence at Eritrea's Dibrazit Debre Zeyit airport.

['Atwan] Brother President, what do you expect from the Arab summit conference?

[Salih] The Arab summit conference will not come up with anything new but we see it as a first step towards restoration of Arab solidarity. The summit's agenda focuses on restoration of Arab solidarity and discussion of continuation of the peace process.

['Atwan] Do you believe that Arab solidarity can be restored without Iraq? Were you in favor of excluding Iraq?

[Salih] We would have preferred Iraq to be present at the summit, and the exclusion of no Arab, so as to turn over a new leaf with all the Arabs. Arab solidarity means opening our hearts and criticizing and condemning the past, at all levels, including the level of what were called [by Kuwait] the hostile states or what were called the international coalition states. Our meeting should begin by remonstrating with and condemning everyone who had erred, with frankness and clarity prevailing at our meeting so that we could remedy our situation and turn over a new leaf.

['Atwan] Will you be meeting with the amir of Kuwait on the sidelines of that summit?

[Salih] I have no objection to a meeting with the amir of Kuwait. I exchange cables, greetings, and messages with him. I have no complex and no problem and I have no quarrel with him despite the ferocious campaign waged by the Kuwaiti press against our country. We have tolerated that because we should rise above these small pinpricks.

['Atwan] Do you expect to meet with Saudi Crown Prince 'Abdallah?

[Salih] I will certainly meet with Prince 'Abdallah on the sidelines of the summit.

['Atwan] Brother President, the disturbing point on Yemen's relations with some Arab states is the fact that there are accusations about the presence of extremist Islamic groups in Yemen and claims that Yemen has become a refuge for such groups.

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[Salih] Actually there is not one Islamic extremist in Yemen. Whoever was here illegally was deported during the past months. They have left the country, and Yemen will not accept any extremist on its territory, whether Islamic or non-Islamic. All ideological trends exist in Yemen in the context of pluralism and we do not need any more trends. We have Islamists, nationalists, leftists, and independents.

['Atwan] Have you handed over any of those?

[Salih] No, we have not. Our Constitution, our dignity, our humanity, and our laws do not allow that, not unless there are agreements between us and any other state on that, in which case we would abide by the agreement. For instance, I have an agreement with Saudi Arabia, so I will abide by that agreement.

['Atwan] Well, you did not hand over al-Mas'ari when he was in your country.

[Salih] He was not here and he did not live here.

['Atwan] Brother President, on the question of putting your own house in order in Yemen, it has been noticed, for example, that you are preparing for elections. Some people claim that the General People's Congress [GPC] wants to control the seats in the next parliament and that it will not enter into any alliances or submit to any pressure to join alliances it does not want to join.

[Salih] It seems that there is a misunderstanding of the statements of the GPC leadership which has said that like other parties, large or small, the GPC would try to win a comfortable majority, otherwise what is the meaning of democracy and pluralism? Everyone has a right to try to win a majority. We will try to get a majority but my view (as president not as party leader) is that if the GPC won a majority, whether absolute or relative, it would be in the national interest to share with the rest of the political parties because our country is still at the beginning of the road of partisan pluralism, but is natural for everyone to seek a majority to rule. Our country has not yet absorbed that well. Citizens still see the head of state as everything, no majority party and no minority party, the head of state is the only responsible official. As head of state I cannot exclude the political forces. We have more than 10 parties who have registered or who are represented in the present House of Representatives and we will invite them to participate in the elections. It is in their interest to do so. Some parties, of course, have no base and will not win any parliamentary seats, not even in 20 years. Some parties only consist of a newspaper.

['Atwan] Could the [Yemeni] Socialist Party [YSP] be included in any future government?

[Salih] If the YSP condemned the secession and took measures against those who betrayed the country, we would welcome it to be with us, even as of tomorrow. We would welcome it because it too is a partner. We will never forget that the YSP was also our partner in unity.

['Atwan] Well, then, do you not believe that this is an impossible condition and may perhaps be meant to block the way to its return to the government?

[Salih] No, not at all. It will not return to power for a long time. It was accustomed to ruling with a military machine, but it is now in its interest to remain in the opposition for some time (25 years, for instance) and to be outside the government in order to get used to democracy so as to be able to reach power. But if it did reach power it would cling to the military machine and would not leave power unless a new generation comes along.

['Atwan] Brother President, do you not believe that Hadhramaut is a candidate for secession from Yemen?

[Salih] That is an absolute impossibility. It is an impossibility. The people of Hadhramaut are supporters of unity to the core, more than others. These little bubbles and elements are found in every society, in every village, countryside, or governorate. To us, Hadhramaut is a governorate with possibilities. It is our strategic depth. It is Yemen's pulsating heart and is more important than the republican palace where we are holding this interview.

['Atwan] Is it true that there are many northern elements there, officials and people from the security sector.

[Salih] There is no such thing as northern and southern. Generally speaking, in Hadhramaut there are 17 non-Hadhramaut employees from the various governorates of the republic.

['Atwan] Seventeen employees?

[Salih] Yes, 17. The rest is local government in the hands of the people of the governorate. True, the Army is there, but it consists of people from all parts of Yemen, and it is there for the protection of the state's sovereignty and to be present on its borders.

['Atwan] Do the people of the governorate have the same opportunities as others?

[Salih] Even more than others. They are in Hadhramaut and in all parts of Yemen. The financial capital and most economic and commercial leaderships from Hadhramaut are in Sanaa, Ta'izz, Aden, and everywhere else in Yemen, and we are proud of them.

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Iraq: Leaflets in South Call For Uprising To Overthrow Regime

NC2406144696 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1400 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Leaflets have been distributed in several southern Iraqi cities urging the inhabitants to carry out a widespread popular uprising against the despotic regime.

The leaflets denounce the regime's policy of oppressing and terrorizing the Iraqi citizens and says that the only salvation from this situation is (?to pounce) on the regime and its henchmen and rescue Iraq and the Iraqi people from the regime's [word indistinct] and cruelty.

According to Iraqi opposition sources, the regime's forces mounted extensive searches for the sources of the leaflets but to no avail.

Earlier the regime's authorities had conducted an extensive search of Baghdad's al-Rashid Hotel after antiregime pamphlets were distributed there exposing its policies and hostile actions.

It should be noted here that the WASHINGTON POST reported yesterday that the Iraqi opposition has a new plan to overthrow the tyrant Saddam Husayn, a plan that enjoys regional and global backing. The newspaper said that the opposition is seeking to organize a coup d'etat to be implemented by senior army officers close to Saddam Husayn. It added that the Iraqi Army will play a major role in overthrowing the tyrant's regime.

Iraq: Clashes Reported Between Republican Guard, Tribe in Mosul

JN2506171896 (Clandestine) Voice of Rebellious Iraq in Arabic 1220 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Our sources in Mosul reported that a major clash took place between the Republican Guard forces and men from al-Hadidiyin tribe in the northern part of Mosul Governorate.

The sources said that Republican Guard units were dispatched by the criminal tyrant [Saddam Husayn] to Mosul on 19 June to suppress al-Hadidiyin tribe, which is settled in various villages between the capital of the governorate and Fa'idah District.

Our sources say the tribesmen confronted the tyrant's forces with light weapons. A battle ensued for several hours. Many Republican Guard soldiers were killed and wounded.

The attackers were then able to occupy a number of villages and arrest Shaykh Mustafa al-Warsham, chief of al-Hadidiyin tribe, and his brother, Shaykh 'Abd-al-Wahid al-Warsham.

Our sources confirm that Shaykh Mustafa al-Warsham is still in detention and that security tension in the areas to the north of Mosul is growing. The sources say members of the tribe continue to stage night raids against Republican Guard positions, demanding the release of the tribal chief, the withdrawal of the occupation troops from their villages, and the return of the property of the citizens plundered by the Republican Guard units.

Early this month, the criminal tyrant issued orders to force the tribes of al-Hadidiyin and al-Shabak to leave their villages between Dahuk and Mosul Governorates. The tribes refused the unfair orders and decided to confront the regime forces. Tribe members took refuge in al-Jazirah area and the hills near their villages and began to prepare for a guerrilla war against the occupation military forces.

Iraq: Agreement Reached With Iran on War Victims Committee

JN2406141496 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1100 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 24 Jun (INA) — Iraq announced that it agreed with Iran to hold a meeting of the joint committee searching for the remains of war victims in the Iranian region of Shalamcheh tomorrow, a press statement issued by the Foreign Ministry said today. The statement added that the meeting comes in the wake of Iraq's initiative by contacting the Iranian Government to study ways to speed up search operations and from Iraq's desire to fulfill its commitments to international humanitarian law and the principles of the tolerant Islamic Shari'ah.

The statement added that Iraq informed the Iranian side that its search efforts for Iranian victims who fell during the Saddam's al-Qadisiyah were successful and that hundreds of bodies were found. The statement said 144 bodies are ready to be delivered to the Iranian side during tomorrow's meeting.

The statement said Iraq's humanitarian initiative reflects its seriousness and eagerness to respect international law and to implement the humanitarian agreements that were concluded in Tehran on 14 September last year.

The statement pointed out that this initiative comes at a time when the Iranian Government insists on its inhuman stands toward Iraqi POW's, who are still suffering from captivity and whose families are also suffering. Iraq expressed hope that the Iranian side will follow suit and take a positive step by releasing Iraqi POW's and returning them to Iraq.

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Iraq: Ceremony for Exchange of Remains With Iran Planned

JN2406161696 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1540 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Al-Basrah, 24 Jun (INA)—The Iraqi-Iranian Coordination Committee today completed its procedures for the exchange of the remains of war victims.

The INA correspondent in the al-Basrah Governorate said there will be an exchange of the remains of several Iraqi martyrs for the remains of 144 Iranian soldiers during funeral ceremonies agreed to by both sides at the Shalamcheh area tomorrow morning. Several officials of the two countries will attend the ceremonies.

The correspondent indicated that this move is the outcome of an Iraqi initiative aimed at implementing the Tehran agreement signed between the two sides on 14 September 1995 on the exchange of the remains of war victims.

An official in the Coordination Committee urged the Iranian side to fully comply with the provisions of the Tehran agreement to resolve the outstanding humanitarian issues related to the war. [passage omitted]

Iraq: Remains of War Victims Exchanged With Iran 25 Jun

JN2506113296 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0957 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Basrah, 25 Jun (INA)—Iraq and Iran exchanged the remains of war victims at the border area of Shalamcheh in the al-Basrah Governorate today.

An INA correspondent in the governorate said that the Iraqi side received the remains of 200 Iraqi martyrs, while Iran received the remains of 144 Iranian soldiers.

The correspondent noted that the remains of the Iraqi martyrs were received during funeral ceremonies. They were wrapped with Iraqi flags, and a military band played the martyrs' funeral tune.

The exchange of war victim remains took place in accordance with the memorandum of understanding signed between Iraq and Iran on 14 September 1995.

Iraq: National Assembly Committee Criticizes Cairo Summit

JN2506170896 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1230 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Jun (INA)—The Arab and International Relations Committee in the National Assembly held a meeting to discuss means to strengthen Arab solidarity as part of their shura [consultation] activities.

Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, head of the committee, referred to President Saddam Husayn's speech at the Crossing Congress of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, which called for achieving Arab solidarity—even a minimum level—in order to serve the Arab nation without letting this policy of ours come at the expense of our pan-Arab principles and aspirations.

Hammudi spoke about Arab developments and the stance of pro-settlement regimes on the issue of Palestine and the Arab-Zionist conflict. He said that the Cairo Summit is the start of a serious stage in joint Arab action, whose negative effects will reflect on all fields of pan-Arab solidarity.

Sa'd 'Abd-al-Majid al-Faysal, first secretary in the Foreign Ministry, reviewed developments in relations with a number of Arab countries, with the aim of reinforcing joint Arab action in view of the challenges in the current pan-Arab stage. He asserted Iraq's eagerness to achieve Arab solidarity.

Taking part in the dialogue were the heads of the Arab and Legal Departments at the Foreign Ministry and university professors who are specialists in politics and international law.

Iraq: Saudi, Kuwaiti Participation in Cairo Summit Criticized

JN2506141796 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0615 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 25 Jun (INA)—The newspaper AL-'IRAQ stresses that the Cairo summit yielded to American threats and Zionist arrogance when it issued resolutions empty of any clear pan-Arab stand. In today's editorial, AL-'IRAQ says: The summit went too far in making concessions to the rancorous regimes; namely, the Saudi and Kuwaiti regimes, which have actually plotted against Arab solidarity and unity. These concessions are represented by the weak resolutions, which are full of falsehoods, lies, and fabrications on Iraq's continued detention of Kuwaiti citizens and its noncompliance with the international legitimacy.

AL-'IRAQ adds: Israel shamelessly turned into a dove of peace, and all the birds at the Cairo summit were in harmony with its disgraceful calls and no's. The paper says: What makes us really laugh is to see the Saudi and Kuwaiti regimes among those who are very concerned about pan-Arabism and Arab fate and who call for Arab solidarity.

The paper says: The Arab masses are aware of the Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers' plotting against the central pan-Arab

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issues and their collaboration with all the enemies of the Arab nation with the aim of encroaching on the Arabs' steadfastness, resistance, and goals of freedom, sovereignty, dignity, pride, and pan-Arab unity. AL-'IRAQ adds: Both agent regimes in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, the enemies of the Arab nation, instigated the Americans, Zionists, and smaller agents to strike at Iraq and destroy it, as well as to kill its sons through the military aggression and through imposing the blockade to deprive its people of food and medicine.

AL-'IRAQ adds: The Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers willingly spent, and are still spending, billions of dollars to plant U.S. military bases in the Arabian Gulf and to turn the region into a base for conspiracies against the Arab issues and the nation's fate. These rulers also squandered national resources on all those who harbored historic hostility toward the Arabs and who tampered with the potential of the nation for decades.

AL-'IRAQ asks: Do such regimes, which are deeply involved in conspiracies, have the right to shed crocodile tears on Arab unity and solidarity? Do they have the right to lead the common Arab action to face decisive pan-Arab challenges? The paper stresses that Iraq does not need and will not be honored to have a certificate of good conduct from a weak summit whose goals and intentions have been exposed and whose decisions conflict with the higher pan-Arab interests in which Iraq believes, for which it offered martyrs in all decisive arenas and battles, and for which it is still paying the taxes.

AL-'IRAQ concludes: The Arab masses have isolated those who believe they can isolate Iraq by buying their conscience and stands. The only abode of these states will be the garbage heap of history, and their fate will be very miserable.

Iraq: Saddam Chairs Cabinet Meeting on Economy, Education

JN2306191696 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 23 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] President Saddam Husayn, may God watch over him, presided over the Council of Ministers' 24th session. During the meeting, a profound reading took place of his excellency's letter to the Council of Ministers on 2 December 1995, and of its renewing economic and social contents.

The leader president said: The unjust blockade is eroding with God's help and with our people's will, faithful patience, interaction with their leadership, and their continued creativity. This is in addition to the continuous support of sons of the Arab nation, as well as the support of the good people in the world, which is represented by the growing international support inside and outside the UN Security Council.

His excellency noted: The blockade will be lifted through our will, and within the framework of the true interaction between the masses of the people and the state's institutions in order to implement the economic approach in accordance with the 2 December 1995 letter with a sense of responsibility and enthusiasm to confront the effects of the unjust blockade and to continue comprehensive development.

A decision was made to adopt a working paper to implement the contents of the historic letter, and that the ministries should make their proposals within the framework of a constant working program in all fields, particularly the economic field.

Speaking about the relationship between education and the economy and development, his excellency stressed that the economy cannot prosper, and cultural awakening cannot reach its peak without educated and experienced people.

His excellency said: Arab awakening, after the Islamic message, reached its peak, not only regarding the spiritual aspect and faith, but also regarding the relationship between life and education.

He noted that the prophet, God's peace and blessing be upon him, paid special attention to education when he linked the release of prisoners to educating 10 Muslims by each prisoner.

The Council of Ministers discussed items on its agenda and made the necessary decisions and recommendations on them.

Iraq: Ports, Waterways Said Ready To Receive Oil Supertankers

JN2206115396 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 22 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has completed its preparations to receive oil supertankers and large and medium commercial ships via its oil and commercial ports and waterways. This was told to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY correspondent by Transport and Communications Minister Dr. Ahmad Murtada Ahmad. The minister added that the cadres of the State Enterprise for Iraqi Ports have prepared the Khawr al-Khafqah navigational routes, which lead to our oil ports, and have furnished them with the internationally required navigational markers.

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Israel: Netanyahu, Christopher Hold News Conference

TA2506135696 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1330 GMT 25 Jun 96

[Joint news conference by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher at the Prime Minister's Office in Jerusalem — live; italicized passages in English]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Netanyahu] *Shalom, Mr. Secretary, welcome. It's a great pleasure for us to welcome you here again. We all have the highest respect for your dedication and your devotion to bringing peace with security to our region. I am certain that the relationship between Israel and the United States is, as I described it to President Clinton, solid as a rock and it will continue to be one of trust and friendship. We've just contributed, I think, to the continuation of that tradition in a very productive discussion, working discussion, which we'll continue tonight. And I look forward for my talks on these matters in greater detail with President Clinton in Washington, D.C. in the forthcoming visit.*

Since Madrid there have been important achievements made to the cementing of broader peace in our area between Israel and its neighbors. We are seeking to preserve these achievements, and to broaden them as well. We intend to resume negotiations with Syria, with Lebanon, and with other Arab states. We believe that the principle that should guide these negotiations is no prior conditions, and I think this is the only way to achieve productive and successful negotiations. And, it's something that has guided us throughout the quest for peace under successive governments.

Equally, we intend to resume negotiations with the Palestinian Authority [PA]. I want to make it clear that we want to see the advancement towards peace, and as well that the achievement of such progress towards peace is contingent on security.

We received a clear mandate from the people. The people want peace with security, and we have to underline that the people told us that terrorism is incompatible with the advancement towards peace. And, therefore, there is a strategic choice for all the parties in the Middle East. It's either terrorism or peace, but you cannot have both. We are committed to continue the search and the achievement of a safe peace for Israel and all its neighbors, and we intend to act on it.

I will continue the negotiations towards this end — I should say the talks towards this end — with the secretary tonight. And, as I said before, I look forward to continuing them in greater detail with President Clinton in Washington.

[Chrisopher] *Thank you very much. Well, I'm very pleased to be back here, in Israel, and especially in Jerusalem and to have had an opportunity to have these conversations with the prime minister and his new colleagues. In this our first meeting since he assumed office we reaffirmed the central importance of the strategic relationship between the United States and Israel and our commitment to maintain the special friendship between our two nations.*

In the context of this special relationship, as the prime minister said, we've just had a very useful discussion on a wide range of issues. Of course, we focused much attention on the Arab- Israeli peace process. The prime minister made it clear to me that, as he's just said, that he's personally committed to the pursuit of peace with security, that a secure peace is a fundamental Israeli interest, and that this commitment reflects the deep hopes and desires of the people of Israel.

Tomorrow I'll go to Cairo to meet with President Mubarak, as well as with Chairman 'Arafat in the near future. Indeed, I can announce today, on the 9th of July, Prime Minister Netanyahu will be coming to Washington to meet with President Clinton. They'll, of course, continue the discussions that we began today. And, indeed, perhaps the principal purpose of my meeting today is to try to help insure that that meeting will be as effective and productive as it possibly can be.

During the last several years we've seen considerable progress toward peace in this region and the beginning of a transformation of the landscape of the Arab-Israeli conflict. But much more remains to be done. The enemies of peace still abound. The prime minister and I resolved today in our discussion that those enemies of peace must not succeed. Instead, we must build for a future, a better future, to preserve and implement the agreements that have been reached with the Palestinians and with Jordan, and to try to achieve future agreements with Lebanon and Syria.

We also must work to create an economic basis for prosperity in the region so that we can demonstrate that peace is not just an abstraction but it has a concrete meaning in the lives of the people. We all have an enormous stake in seeing this process continue and in achieving a real peace between Israel and the Arabs. That peace must be lasting and secure. Indeed, real peace without security is not possible and real security without peace is also impossible.

Our long enduring relationship with Israel is based upon shared values, shared interests, and deeply-rooted friendship. We have an unshakeable commitment to Israel's security and well-being. As the President said,

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we will do everything within our power to help Israel minimize the risks it is taking for peace.

With the trust and confidence that have long been the hallmarks of our relationship with Israel, we will work to move forward toward the kind of peace that the people in this region have long deserved and have long been denied. Thank you very much.

[Qol Yisra'el's Shlomo Raz] Mr. Prime Minister, during his flight to Israel, Secretary of State Christopher said he would urge you to open a direct channel with PA Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. He also noted the need to carry out the redeployment in Hebron. What is your reaction to these remarks by Secretary of State Christopher?

[Netanyahu] You mean the remarks attributed to Secretary of State Christopher. These are two different things. First of all, we are making efforts and intend to open a channel of dialogue with the PA. We did this as soon as the election results were published on the first day, actually within the first hour. My political adviser Dore Gold spoke on the phone with Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. We are opening additional channels. I said there were many problems on the road to peace between the Palestinians — the PA — and Israel, but a lack of communication channels will not be one of them. We are maintaining contacts and will expand our channels of communication. There will be a dialogue. As for your second question on Hebron. That is a very complicated issue. As you know, we support the principle that agreements should be upheld by all the parties. We are also aware of the fact that the agreements as well as making progress toward peace depend, as I have already said, on the issue of security. Security is a fundamental problem in Hebron. It is very serious, complicated, and difficult. I do not have to remind you that in 1929 the Jews were massacred there and the Jewish community in Hebron was eliminated. The massacre at the Cave of the Patriarchs [February 1994] was also a terrible outbreak of violence. Therefore, we must move forward slowly on the Hebron issue while studying the facts. I think this calls for extreme caution and responsibility. We must not be hasty. Therefore, we are studying the problem.

[Channel 2 Television's 'Imanu'el Rosen] Mr. Prime Minister, the possibility of a meeting between Yasir 'Arafat and yourself was not discussed only on Christopher's plane. Many professionals have also expressed the opinion that it the time has come for you and 'Arafat — and not your respective aides — to hold direct contacts. I want to know what has to happen to make you hold direct contacts or call a meeting. Also, with regard to the Hebron issue, we recall that prior to the elections you said that the redeployment in Hebron should be put off until the negotiations on the permanent settlement. Have you changed your mind on this issue?

[Netanyahu] I can only reiterate what I told your colleague from Qol Yisra'el. We are opening channels at various levels with the PA. These contacts are underway and will be expanded over the coming days. I repeat that we are studying all aspects of the Hebron issue. Although less then a week has passed since the government was formed, I have already devoted hours to studying and examining the Hebron issue and I intend to complete my comprehension of the subject so we will be able to establish a clear position on this issue.

[Unidentified U.S. correspondent] *Mr. Prime Minister, we haven't heard that catch phrase land for peace so far today, unless it has been said in Hebrew and I didn't catch it. Are you still hearing the American strategy is one of land for peace? And, since it doesn't seem to be your campaign strategy, does it make you uncomfortable that the Administration is promoting an approach that maybe is no longer consistent with Israel?*

[Netanyahu] *First of all, I am very comfortable with the American position as an ally of Israel and as a genuine engine for peace. And, we seek the participation of the United States in moving this region, and specifically Israel's relations with our Arab neighbors, towards peace. I think the United States has been a stalwart champion of the idea of direct negotiations and of the idea of no prior conditions. We have our positions, some of the parties have different positions. The important thing is not to force anything in advance of negotiations. In fact, not to force anything during the negotiations, but to have negotiations in which the different views can be exchanged and, one would hope, at the end resolved. But this is something that I believe both the Government of Israel and the Government of the United States believe as a common principle, that we should have no prior conditions.*

[IDF Radio's Udi Segal] *Mr. Secretary, do you deliver a strong message to the prime minister against any expansion of the settlements? And, with your permission, one question in Hebrew to the prime minister.*

Mr. Prime Minister, do you intend to keep your pre-election promise to the voters and build new settlements in the territories while expanding the existing ones?

[Christopher] *Let me tell you in answer to your first question that the primary purposes of my trip here were essentially three: First, to underscore the important strategic relationship between the United States and Israel and to make it absolutely plain that that's an unshakeable commitment by the United States. Second, I emphasize that the United States was committed to*

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assist the parties in pursuing peace. The prime minister has made it clear that he wants to do that without prior conditions, without preconditions. That's certainly a position that we strongly support. And finally, the purpose of the trip here was to help prepare for an effective, valuable meeting between President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu, and I am sure that will be a most useful meeting. I have not in the past gotten into specific issues where I have been asked about the positions of the United States and I don't intend to start doing so today. I think if I begin to talk about particular issues I will devalue my role in this peace process. And so, I only emphasize what the underlying importance of the visit was: our strategic relationship, the commitment of both parties to pursue peace without preconditions. And finally, in the hopes of establishing a working relationship between the prime minister and the United States which, of course, will be reflected in the conversations in Washington.

[Netanyahu] In reply to your question, Udi Segal. You are familiar with my positions and those of my government with regard to the Jewish people's undisputable right to settle in all parts of Eretz Yisra'el. A decision with regard to the details of this policy and how settlement activity will be pursued has still not been reached and will be made in future. But as for our basic rights, our position is well-known and constant.

[Israel Television Channel 1's Shlomi Eldar] Mr. Prime Minister, you were quoted in NEWSWEEK as praising Yasir 'Arafat and the PA for their war against terrorism. My colleagues and I are trying to understand whether you are making a personal meeting between you and 'Arafat conditional on the latter's success in fighting Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Islamic Jihad terrorism?

[Netanyahu] First of all, you are mistaken about the quote. I was not quoted as praising the PA. I said that over the past few months that it has been proven that the PA is capable of taking action to prevent and foil terrorism. It proved this to a partial extent. We are not satisfied with everything that is being done, nor, should I say, with many things that were not done. However, if anyone was in doubt on this issue, the PA proved that it has clear capabilities. I said that we expect the Palestinian side to honor its commitments in this sphere. Honoring commitments is vital for imparting security — not merely physical security but also confidence with regard to the continuation of the process between the parties.

[Eldar] And after you are satisfied in this regard is there a chance that will you meet with Yasir 'Arafat?

[Netanyahu] I said that if I believe that such a meeting is crucial for Israel's security and the future of peace, then I will consider it.

[Steve Ehrlinger of THE NEW YORK TIMES] *Mr. Prime Minister, you've said many times that you want peace negotiations without preconditions, and yet you seem to have some. On the Golan, for instance, you have said that you do not want... [changes thought] that Israel will retain sovereignty over the Golan. Why is this not a precondition? Why isn't this an assumption of how the negotiation will end, if there is any negotiation?*

[Netanyahu] *Look, I can tell you that we went to Madrid with our position that is well known. The Syrians went to Madrid with their position that is well known. No one said: We're not coming because the other side has a contrary position. We went and began negotiations, and we intend to continue those negotiations. I think the Madrid framework was a very useful one, because it allowed us in fact to engage, despite conflicting positions, in what could be a productive process. And I think no side is forced to change its positions, and yet there are many, many areas of potential common interest below the question or beyond or before the question of territorial disputes on which we disagree.*

[Lee Katz of USA TODAY] *Mr. Prime Minister, are you going to complete the partial withdrawal from Hebron? Did you tell the secretary of state that?*

Mr. Secretary, what did you hear from the prime minister about Hebron, and what would you like the Israeli Government to do about withdrawal from Hebron?

[Netanyahu] *It sounds like a cross-examination. First you ask me, then you ask him what he asked me. I told Secretary Christopher exactly what I told you here, and you will hear rapidly a confirmation about that; namely, that we are setting the question of Hebron in all its complexity — historical complexity, religious complexity, security complexity of the highest order — and that's exactly what I told him. [sentence as heard]*

[Christopher] *You won't be surprised that I confirm that the prime minister told me exactly what he has said here in our private meetings.*

[Katz] *Well, I said what I wanted to know is: What would you like to hear from the prime minister about Hebron? For example, yesterday you said that the prime minister had said that he intends to adhere to the international agreements and that the pullout of Hebron was an international agreement. Do you think Israel should announce its intention to complete the redeployment of troops from Hebron?*

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[Christopher] *I don't want to go beyond where I have been. The prime minister indicated that he will respect agreements and he is studying the matter with great intensity, and certainly it is a very complex issue, as he says.*

[David Makovsky of THE JERUSALEM POST] *In an interview that Mr. Netanyahu gave before his election he said that if the Syrians didn't agree to the sorts of peace agreements that he had in mind and they kept the Palestinian rejectionists in Damascus, he believes the United States — which should be joined by Europe — should apply the same sort of sanctions, he said, that it applies to countries like Iran and Libya. And, people in his circle have talked about the notion of triple containment. I want to ask you what you think about this idea and, also, at Sharm al-Shaykh we had a conference there in March. There was supposed to be a follow-up meeting in Luxembourg, the meeting never happened. Can you give us a little update of what plans to be done on the antiterrorism front? Thank you, sir.*

[Christopher] *Well, you know the position of the United States against terrorism is a very strong one. Syria is on the U.S. terrorism list and subject to the circumstances that result from being on that list. We continue to take a very strong position against terrorism and we'll not stop doing so. The prime minister has indicated he wishes to go forward with negotiations without preconditions. We're strongly in favor of direct negotiations between the parties to resolve these issues, wanting to be helpful in whatever way we can.*

With respect to Sharm al-Shaykh, I think that was an extremely important meeting. It reflected the fact that 14 or 15 Arab countries declared their antagonism to terrorism, their support for Israel and its fight against terrorism. We intend to follow up that meeting in bilateral channels for the time being, because we think that will be the most productive way to follow up on this. I think that meeting was a very strong indication of the condemnation throughout this region of terrorist activities.

[Netanyahu] *Let me make one final comment. Mr. Secretary, you know that this is a government of reforms, structural reforms inside Israel. I want to promise you that the next time you'll be here I'll make a structural reform in this room and give some air conditioning. The press also deserve it. Thank you very much.*

Israel: U.S. Said Preparing Washington 'Summit' of Mideast Leaders

TA2606112196 Tel Aviv HATZOFE in Hebrew 26 Jun 96 p 1

[Report by our political correspondent and ITIM]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, together with the members of the U.S. peace team, yesterday examined an idea proposed by the U.S. Administration to have Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu meet with Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat within the framework of a summit of Middle East leaders in Israel, sponsored by President Clinton, with the participation of Netanyahu, Egyptian President Mubarak, Jordan's King Husayn, and 'Arafat.

Such a summit would let Netanyahu and 'Arafat meet under the umbrella of U.S. and Middle East leadership and thus grant the Israeli leader a "seal of approval" from the Israeli public to meet with 'Arafat — this, after Netanyahu's election campaign ads claimed that former Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' handshake with 'Arafat posed a threat to Israel.

The U.S. Administration fears that the peace process will run aground unless Netanyahu meets with 'Arafat. They are also concerned that a freeze on the Palestinian-Israeli track will affect the negotiations with Syria. The U.S. team has reached the conclusion that any failure to break the ice between 'Arafat and Netanyahu will have an adverse effect on Middle East developments. These concerns lie behind yesterday's declarations by Netanyahu and Foreign Minister David Levi on opening channels of dialogue with the PA. The idea for the summit comes from the U.S. peace team in Washington, and additional contacts with regional leaders are required in order to finalize it. It is believed Netanyahu will have no choice but to attend such a meeting. [passage omitted]

Israel: Levi Protests Egypt's Behavior in Meeting With Christopher

TA2506170096 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister David Levi voiced his concern about Egypt's behavior in the international arena toward the peace process and Israel to U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. Egypt has a commitment to make things easier rather than more difficult, Levi emphasized, and the U.S. guest replied: I agree with you. Nevertheless, Christopher added, one should not forget that the Egyptians have

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helped the process so far. They must be mobilized and one should know how to do that, he observed.

Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz points out that in their closed meeting, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told Christopher: There will no longer be a situation where whenever a difficulty comes up in the negotiations and Israel stands on principle the Palestinians respond with a terror attack. [passage omitted]

Knesset Members Shim'on Peres and Ehud Baraq also conferred with the U.S. secretary of state in Jerusalem. Reacting to the prime minister's either-terror-or-war pronouncement, Baraq told correspondents this was wishful thinking or at best an illusion.

Israel: Levi Reportedly Suggests Meeting With 'Arafat

TA2506154896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1505 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Anchorperson Goni Mardor] The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Foreign Minister David Levi ended a short time ago. It was preceded by a meeting and news conference by Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and the U.S. secretary of state. Another news conference is currently under way at the Foreign Ministry. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz is there to report:

[Raz] Foreign Minister David Levi is making news. He just said, almost explicitly, that a meeting is expected to take place between him and Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat. Levi said: We will talk with the PA. When a correspondent persisted and asked him whether he would meet with 'Arafat, Levi said: Do you know an authority without a chairman?

I believe these were very clear words. Although he did not say it in so many words, Levi broadly hinted that he will meet, perhaps even sometime soon, with the PA chairman. I believe this is the most important message emerging from this session, although the issue may not have necessarily come up in his meeting with the U.S. secretary of state, who naturally held his most important meeting with Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu.

The meeting with Levi dealt mainly with creating the mechanism which will enable the Foreign Ministry and the State Department to work together on the implementation of the Oslo Accords between Israel and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

[Mardor] Here are Levi's remarks in his own voice, as we heard them a short time ago. In a roundabout way, Foreign Minister David Levi did not rule out the possibility that he might meet with the PA chairman.

[Begin recording] [Levi] There are things which must be arranged and frameworks that must be set. At the end of the day, we have already announced that we will speak with the authority, and that we will negotiate with it.

[Unidentified correspondent] Does the authority mean Yasir 'Arafat?

[Levi] Do you know an authority without a chairman? [end recording]

Israel: Weizman Tells Christopher Iran Behind Saudi Arabia Bombing

TA2606070396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu told Secretary of State Warren Christopher that the Israeli people have sent their condolences and identified with the American public following the terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia. The prime minister said the cooperation between Israel and the United States in the war against terrorism would be demonstrated in the near future.

Our correspondent Gay Qotev reports that the prime minister was speaking at a ceremony marking the transfer of powers at the Construction and Housing Ministry.

President 'Ezer Weizman said he discussed the terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia at his meeting with Secretary of State Christopher this morning. Weizman told his American guest that Iran was behind the bombing. At a meeting with news correspondents, the president told the U.S. secretary of state that it appeared that Egypt was leading anti-Israeli moves. Weizman asked Christopher to deliver a message to this effect to Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. Secretary of State Christopher is now leaving for Egypt where he will meet President Mubarak and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasir 'Arafat.

Israel: Cabinet Secretary on Saudi Bombing, Christopher Visit

TA2606055896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Cabinet Secretary Dani Nave expressed deep sorrow on behalf of the Israeli Government over the death of the U.S. servicemen in the terrorist attack in Saudi Arabia.

Nave told Qol Yisra'el that the attack in Saudi Arabia underscores the need for cooperation between Israel and the United States in the war against terrorism and in the efforts to achieve peace and security.

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Nave asserted that the purpose of Secretary of State Warren Christopher's visit to Jerusalem was to enable the U.S. Administration to become acquainted with the basic guidelines of the new Israeli Government, which were different from those of its predecessor.

At his meetings with Christopher, Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu made it clear that he desired to make progress in the negotiations with the Palestinians and Syria, while observing the principle that agreements should be upheld. Nevertheless, the main test would be security. Dani Nave noted that at yesterday's news conference in Jerusalem, Secretary of State Christopher also used the terms peace and security and negotiations without preconditions.

As for the question of whether a meeting had been set up between Foreign Minister David Levi and Palestinian Authority [PA] Chairman Yasir 'Arafat, the cabinet secretary replied that no such meeting had been scheduled prior to Prime Minister Netanyahu's trip to the United States. Nave, however, went on to clarify that Netanyahu had reiterated that although there were many outstanding problems between the Palestinians and Israel, a lack of communication channels would not be one of them.

Israel: Defense Minister's Message Delivered to PA Official

TA2506183396 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1700 GMT 25 Jun 96

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Major General Oren Shahor, coordinator of activities in the territories, met this evening with Jamil al-Tarifi, the Palestinian Authority's [PA] official in charge of civilian affairs, and handed him a message from Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay.

Our correspondent in the territories Yoram Kohen reports that in the message the PA is asked to cease issuing passports to residents of East Jerusalem, to abstain from any construction at the airfield near Rafah without permission, ban the abuse of VIP cards, and step up activities against terror.

Al-Tarifi asked Israel to release 'Abbas Zaki, a Palestinian Council member who was arrested today at the Allenby Bridge.

Israel: Qahalani Says Government Will Stop PA Activity in Jerusalem

TA2506161396 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1400 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Public Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani says the new government will stop all Palestinian police activity in Jerusalem. The minister was talking with reporters while touring police stations in the eastern part of the city. For more on the minister's tour, over to Yishay Eldar.

[Eldar] Accompanied by Police Commander Asaf Hefetz and senior police officers, Public Security Minister Avigdor Qahalani said he was in East Jerusalem on his first official visit to study the area and see what is going on.

[Begin recording] [Qahalani] Jerusalem is part of Israel and we are visiting here a part of Israel. This area and the west for me is the same. We are going to serve the people here and if we need to open a new office we will do it, but we should take care about the people. They live in this area and the western area. It is the same in my opinion.

[Eldar] What do you intend to do about the Palestinian police and security activities in the city?

[Qahalani] We will take care about that. I think very soon they will disappear from this area.

[Eldar] Since the beginning of the intifadah, the city has been to all practical purposes divided as far as most of the Israeli population is concerned. How do you hope to overcome this?

[Qahalani] The reason that we build a new police station in this area is that we try to keep Jerusalem united and of course we will never give any chance to divide the city into two parts. [end recording]

[Eldar] Asked about Palestinian Authority [PA] activities at Orient House in East Jerusalem, Qahalani said the problem has not yet been solved but that it will be discussed in the government. The minister then made a brief walkabout in front of the Salah al-Din Street police station, talking in Hebrew with several East Jerusalem residents, all of whom expressed their hope for peace and wished him luck in his new post.

Israel: Porush on Government Construction Plans

TA2606075596 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0400 GMT 26 Jun 96

[Telephone interview with Me'ir Porush, Israeli deputy construction and housing minister, by correspondents Mikha Friedman and Ya'el Dan; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Friedman] Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu said yesterday in the presence of Secretary of State Warren Christopher that the government's position with regard to the indisputable right of the Jewish people to settle in all parts of Eretz

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Yisra'el was well known. A decision has not yet been reached with regard to the detailed implementation of this policy, but it will be made in the future. However, there is no question as to the Jewish people's basic rights. This is what we want to discuss with Me'ir Porush, deputy construction and housing minister. Good morning to you.

[Porush] Good morning.

[Friedman] I take it then that our basic and indisputable position is clear. Now comes the time for concrete policy measures such as massive construction in the territories, for which I understand you are among those responsible. Do you already have specific ideas on how to implement this policy?

[Porush] First of all, I hope no one is questioning our fundamental right to all parts of Eretz Yisra'el. As for the implementation, it is a question of how this policy is carried out. I believe the government has yet to consolidate its position on this, and it is premature to discuss it in the media.

[Dan] What policy would you like to see?

[Porush] Seeing as the cabinet has not consolidated its policy, do you think I should talk about it over the radio? Things will only appear even more confused.

[Friedman] Mr. Porush, we are not asking about maps or the exact location of construction sites. However, in general, do you accept the principle that existing settlements should definitely be expanded and that new settlements should perhaps also be built?

[Porush] Look, prior to the elections, the Likud and its chairman spoke about fleshing out the settlements. I do not think that it would be wise to reveal our plans for Eretz Yisra'el today. This is something that must be consolidated and ironed out. One must also carefully study what U.S. officials are saying. In light of all this, we will then reach a decision and decide on the date of its implementation.

[Friedman] There is one thing shared by both you and the outgoing construction and housing minister, who will turn over his office to you today in an orderly fashion. Both of you talk about changing the order of priorities. However, while the Labor Party sought to build inside the Green Line instead of in the territories, you are calling for more construction for the ultra-Orthodox community. If we build in the territories....

[Porush, interrupting] Where did you hear that?

[Friedman] I assume that is your position. Is it not?

[Porush] We seek to function in the most professional manner. Being professional is providing everyone with what they rightfully deserve. If part of the public is discriminated against, whether they are new immigrants, young couples, or ultra-Orthodox Jews, then this is not professional. We will act in a professional manner.

[Friedman] Do you intend to build housing units for the ultra-Orthodox in the territories or inside the Green Line?

[Porush] We intend to build housing units for the Israeli people wherever they can and want to live. Certainly, some things must conform to government policy. Not every single person can get what he wants.

[Dan] Do employees of the Construction and Housing Ministry now have to fear for their jobs?

[Porush] Look, I think there are great people working at the Construction and Housing Ministry who will continue to do a good job. It is customary that whenever a new minister is appointed they bring close associates who share their way of thinking. This is accepted everywhere in the world and in every ministry in Israel.

[Dan] Do you already have a list of prospective appointments?

[Porush] Do you think I carry a list in my pocket? It does not work that way. I have to familiarize myself with the office and its departments and form an appraisal of each employee. There may be people there who can contribute. Perhaps some employees have left, and there is room for new appointments. I am not ruling out anybody for any job.

[Friedman] You will be able to familiarize yourself with the ministry even more quickly than usual because the prime minister is going to take the Public Works Department and the Rural Building and New Settlements Administration away from you.

[Porush] I know nothing about what they are going to take away from me. No one discussed the matter with me. There has been a lot of talk on the radio for the past 10 days, but no one has spoken to us.

[Dan] Will you give the Public Works Department to Ari'el Sharon?

[Porush] It is not a question of giving it to Sharon. I think Sharon deserves much more than dealing with rural construction which has a budget of a mere 130 million shekels. That is not what Sharon should be doing. Sharon can handle far bigger projects. It is not a matter of Sharon. We fear the establishment of a new Construction and Housing Ministry if another ministry receives budgets to start developing land, which can later be marketed. I do not want to be in charge of an office that merely looks after the ultra-Orthodox.

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Definitely not. I believe that both the ultra-Orthodox and the secular communities should work together for the common good.

[Friedman] The bottom line is that you refuse to transfer any authorities from your ministry to Sharon. Is that right?

[Porush] That is not the way to present it. I pray with all my heart that Sharon will have the opportunity to realize his capabilities, and I feel that the proposals he has received are not worthy of him.

[Dan] Deputy Minister Porush, you have managed to evade almost all our questions. That is no small accomplishment.

[Friedman] And this even before assuming your post.

[Porush] Thank you very much.

Israel: Agenda of Christopher's Visit Viewed

TA2306115096 Tel Aviv MA'ARIV [HAYOM supplement] in Hebrew 23 Jun 96 p 5

[Article by Washington correspondent Avino'am Bar-Yosef: "Letting Go of Suspicion"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Over six years ago a NEW YORK TIMES columnist published a series of articles that led to tension between the U.S. Administration and the Israeli Government. They focused on the efforts of then-Secretary of State James Baker to impose what Yitzhaq Shamir perceived as unacceptable conditions for the Madrid conference on the Middle East.

Some in Jerusalem pointed an accusing finger at the Policy Planning Staff under Dennis Ross. The articles described Ross and his men as Jew-boys trying to appease the American master. The wicked description aroused a sharp reaction by the Jewish community against Dennis Ross, Aaron Miller, Dan Kurtzer, and Richard Haass. Israeli politicians, both left and right, insinuated to Washington that Binyamin Netanyahu had been behind the articles and managed to drive a wedge between Netanyahu and the administration.

Of course, this is not the main reason for the American support of Labor in the election campaign, but had personal relations between the new prime minister and the peace team been better, support for Shim'on Peres might have been milder.

As soon as the results of the elections were in, Clinton phoned Netanyahu to congratulate him and invite him to Washington. Congressmen are organizing for Netanyahu a special appearance before a joint session of the Senate and the House of Representatives. In recent days the Americans wanted to send Ross to Jerusalem to discuss all the tracks of the negotiations with Netanyahu, but the latter made clear that he was not yet ready for such a session. He said he had to form a coalition and set up the consulting teams on political, security, and military issues. He did not conceal his wish for the U.S. secretary of state to visit Israel first, as had been the custom with Labor prime ministers.

When U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's plane lands at Ben-Gurion Airport on Tuesday, this will not be another routine stop in his shuttle trips. He will be delivering the first sign of international legitimization Netanyahu has been seeking since the elections. The peace team will be coming with him to turn over a new page. They will make a genuine effort to lay the foundation of a good relationship based on trust and cooperation, which they hope will eventually do away with past rancor and generate true friendship.

Even if the purpose of the visit is to set working procedures and prepare the meeting between Netanyahu and Clinton, all the issues on the agenda will be discussed in the talks, from Hebron through the talks about the permanent arrangement with the Palestinians, Jordan's position, and the new Israeli policy vis-a-vis Syria.

The Americans are anxious about the explosive use al-Asad makes of Hizballah. They fear the Netanyahu government might initiate drastic reactions leading to the emergence of new coalitions in the Middle East which would push Syria into the arms of the rejectionist countries. They would like to see a new Israeli team that can see a few steps ahead. They will raise all options with Netanyahu, ranging from the security zone and a harsh warning to Syria, through strengthening the Israeli presence versus Hizballah, and the use of the military option and its repercussions.

They will discuss the negative signals coming from Egypt and its efforts to acquire missiles. They will talk about increasing cooperation with Jordan and strengthening its economy. Of course, they will raise the question of 'Arafat. In recent days they warned him not to declare a Palestinian state or deal with the issue of Jerusalem because this could boomerang against him. They tried to set a meeting, but 'Arafat evaded them. His aides in Gaza said he was in Hanoi, but he did not return the calls.

Initial reports received in Washington show that the people surrounding Netanyahu are prepared to stretch out their hand to the Americans, although they fear the Americans have not entirely digested the change. It seems the Americans are trying to tread the same path they did with Labor — namely, a different policy and priorities. "If Christopher and Ross are willing

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to consider our proposals seriously and to update their plans, then there will be full cooperation and coordination between us. But they must understand that a change has taken place in Israel and that the people decided that not only the strategic goals but also the tactical moves must be changed," staffers in the prime minister's bureau in Jerusalem say.

Indeed, Clinton needs Netanyahu's hand. His popularity in the polls has decreased significantly lately. Americans are concerned about the Whitewater affair. They do not like the White House's evasiveness on the issue, and they don't understand the financial complexities involved.

Contrary to Whitewater, everybody understands the White House's involvement in the affair of the FBI files containing confidential personal information about senior Republican officials, such as James Baker. Clinton is suspected of having misused this information and invaded the privacy of political rivals. This kind of event does not pass quietly in America and might exact a stiff price at the ballot box. Americans are fed up with his evasiveness.

Netanyahu's upcoming visit will come at the right time. More than he cares about the Jewish vote, Clinton cares about Jewish donors. Quite a few of those who contributed to his previous election campaign also contributed to Netanyahu's campaign. He hopes the meeting with the new Israeli prime minister and the reception he will host for him will bring at least some of these donors back to his lap.

Netanyahu may also benefit. First of all, the U.S. elections provide him with a respite. Secondly, he could reach a series of strategic understandings with Clinton — such as on the question of the borders, Jerusalem, and the water sources on the Golan — which would make him more amenable to compromise.

The U.S. secretary of state's visit is meant to prevent future misunderstandings which could lead to a rift between the two countries and their political teams. Ross' peace team will do its best not to deviate from whatever is agreed upon. It will ask Netanyahu about the prominence he would be willing to give David Levi in the negotiations and the level of consultations it would be able to hold with Yitzhaq Mordekhay. These are weighty issues, and it remains unknown whether the two capitals will be willing to let go of the mutual suspiciousness and set an agenda mutually agreed upon.

In any event, Netanyahu does not plan to show all his cards during Christopher's visit. He believes some of the goodies should be reserved for the President, which is exactly what he will do.

Israel: Cabinet Urged To Implement Hebron Agreement, Avoid Conflict

TA2506113196 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Jun 96 p 2

[Editorial: "There Is No Justification for Violating an Agreement"]

[FBIS Translated Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher is arriving in Tel Aviv today. This, of course, is his first visit to postelection Israel and a first in-depth meeting with the new prime minister and foreign minister. So far, the Clinton administration has not had real contacts with the Likud leaders, and information on Netanyahu's political stands was mainly obtained from the media and indirect reports.

Christopher's visit should primarily renew the intimate, understanding relations between Washington and Jerusalem; this is a supreme Israeli interest and an important strategic U.S. interest. In the absence of such an understanding, Israel would find it hard to go on with the peace process: American backing is a major component in Israel's willingness to compromise with the Arab world.

Coming to Israel, Christopher expects Netanyahu to present a message of continuity in Israel's policy. The U.S. Administration understands that the Likud government's stands are not identical to those of the Labor government, but it hopes that the lack of identity does not mean contradiction and denial. Prime Minister Netanyahu and Foreign Minister Levi will find that Christopher understands their world view, provided that they show flexibility. And above all: The United States, as a state and a society, is very careful about observing signed contracts between individuals or countries. Violating an agreement is the most deplorable thing in the tradition of American constitutional liberalism.

Such an agreement — the one on the evacuation of Hebron — was signed between the Labor government and the Palestinian Authority [PA] and is waiting to be implemented. The new Likud government has no reason not to notify Christopher of a quick implementation of the agreement. The Palestinian part of the city has, in fact, been evacuated, and the 400 Jews in the other part of town are already living under reasonable conditions, considering the unusual living conditions they chose. A serious deviation from the agreement to evacuate Hebron would get the Israeli Government into an unnecessary conflict with the U.S. Administration, the PA, and the Arab world. There is no justification for that.

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Israel: 'Sources' Say Israel 'Can Live' With Cairo Statement

TA2406045896 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0400 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The resolutions of the Cairo summit will prominently feature in the discussions U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher will hold in Jerusalem when he arrives here this week. Our political correspondent reports that in the next few days, Israel will call on the Palestinians, Egypt, and Jordan to resume the dialogue with it.

[A similar report by political correspondent Shlomo Raz on Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0405 GMT on 24 June adds that when asked about Syria, "Jerusalem sources said: If they want to come without preconditions and follow our government guidelines, they are welcome."

[In a recorded passage, Binyamin Netanyahu says: "Peace is the heartfelt wish of every Israeli citizen. It is our strategic goal, and I believe it should be the strategic goal of every Arab state. Such peace can be attained without preconditions: We will not dictate to them, and they will not dictate to us. The attempt to determine issues or dictate preconditions that harm Israel's security does not coincide with a true peace process. This is why such preconditions should be removed so that Israel and the Arab states can move forward toward the peace that is everybody's wish."]

Senior circles in the prime minister's bureau stressed that the peace process is continuing, which is the most important message emerging from the closing statement of the Cairo summit and Netanyahu's reaction. The circles noted that the prime minister has deliberately avoided addressing specific details of the disagreements between Israel and the Arab world, adding that Israel can live with the resolutions, as they put it.

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Jordan: Paper Views Christopher Tour, Urges Withdrawal From Hebron

JN2506120096 Amman AL-ASWAQ in Arabic 25 Jun 96 p 19

[Editorial: "Christopher Explores the Possibility of Activating the Negotiations"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The first U.S.-Israeli meeting after Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu victory in the recent elections will take place today. The meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and the new Israeli Government team will be held shortly after the Arab summit in Cairo, which approved the continued Arab participation in peace efforts as a pan-Arab strategic option over the next stage.

It is clear that the Arab summit, which probably would not have convened at this time without Netanyahu's election victory, provided the U.S. Administration, in its capacity as the main sponsor of the peace process, with Arab support to put the program declared by the Israeli Government to the test.

The summit approved all the principles that were agreed on at the Madrid peace conference for the bilateral and multilateral negotiations. It emphasized the importance of what has been achieved so far and the need to continue negotiations to reach a just and comprehensive peace and the full return of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, whose cause is the crux of the conflict.

On the other hand, the U.S. Administration, which expressed optimism over Netanyahu's declared commitment to the already-signed agreements and his readiness to continue the negotiations, will not find an alternative to discussing the details with Netanyahu if it wants its sponsorship of the negotiations to realize its objectives. Those goals being the establishment of a system for security, stability, and cooperation in the Middle East and between the Arabs and Israel in particular.

Although the U.S. secretary's tour, which will include Tel Aviv today and Cairo tomorrow, can be described as an exploratory visit that is not expected to result in major decisions or specific measures. The strong commitment of all peaceful parties should be maintained and suitable grounds should be established to render fruitful the meetings taking place in the next stage when Netanyahu visits Washington, Cairo, and Amman. This will count for a great deal following the regional shock caused by Shim'on Peres' absence and the emergence of the new Israeli prime minister.

Although real peace requires a radical solution to the Palestine question, and Jerusalem in particular, and the full return of all occupied Arab territories in the Golan and Lebanon, an immediate initiative, such as Israeli withdrawal from Hebron, will be a positive sign that, we hope, Christopher's visit to Tel Aviv will decide today.

Jordan: Paper Hopes Christopher Can Restore 'Damage' to Peace Process

JN2606111296 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 26 Jun 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Christopher and the Israeli Prevarication"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Information leaked from the U.S. secretary of state's meetings with Israeli officials yesterday, and the statements made by Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu following these meetings confirm the seriousness of the fears that emerged in the region and the world after the Israeli right wing's assumption of power. The frenzied Israeli reaction to the Arab summit and its resolutions clearly indicated the approach the new Israeli officials will follow vis-a-vis the future of the peace process. Clearly, Warren Christopher came to the region once again to restore the damage that was done to the peace process by the Netanyahu government's policy statement.

It seems that Netanyahu's government, which is made up of hardline extremists, started to rely on a policy based on repeatedly announcing commitment to peace on the one hand, and undermining the political groundwork of this process, which started in Madrid in 1991, on the other. This is done through using the pretext of the need to embark on the peace negotiations without preconditions, i.e. away from the terms of reference that were previously agreed on.

This time, the U.S. secretary of state came to the region bearing in mind that the new Israeli officials are planning a long diplomatic circumvention of the peace process because they do not want to be accused of opposing it. It should be noted that their electoral campaign was based on halting this process in the event they assume power. The Israeli officials want to appear as if they want to continue negotiations away from any actual commitment to the pledges of the former Israeli government.

Accordingly, lack of world confidence in Netanyahu's peace statements and the deep doubts shrouding the Israeli Government's commitment to the peace process are at the center of Warren Christopher's current mission. Moreover, these two factors are the primary catalyst of this tour, which came on the heels of all these deceptive Israeli statements about adherence to peace. This tour also comes after the collective Arab announcement at the Cairo summit of readiness to continue along the

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road of accomplishing a just and comprehensive peace according to the terms of reference of the Madrid conference.

In light of all this, we hope that the U.S. secretary of state will be able to determine the reality of the Israeli policy on the future of the Middle East peace process. We also hope that he will succeed in forcing Israel to respect its practical commitments to the immediate requirements of the peace process. This should help prevent this exposed Israeli maneuver from having a negative impact that will threaten all that was achieved by the U.S diplomacy over the past few years.

Jordan: Possibility of Jordanian-Syrian Summit in Damascus 'Soon'

MM2506112596 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 25 Jun 96 p 3

[Report by Shahadah Abu-Baqar: "Amman Talking of Possible Jordanian-Syrian Summit in Damascus"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Amman — Sources close to the Jordanian delegation returning to Amman from the Cairo summit announced a possibility for a Jordanian-Syrian summit meeting being held in Damascus soon. Items on the agenda would be to further discuss relations between the two countries, review the peace process, and discuss Jordan's role with regard to the Syrian and Lebanese tracks with Israel.

The sources also expressed their satisfaction at the Jordanian official and people's welcome of the anticipated relaxation in Jordanian-Syrian relations following King Husayn's meeting with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad on the periphery of the Arab summit, whose proceedings concluded in Cairo the day before yesterday. The sources expressed their cautious optimism about an improvement in relations between the two countries, which have been tense since the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty was signed, as Syria believes that this treaty has weakened its position in the negotiations with Israel.

The Jordanian delegation sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that King Husayn's meeting with President al-Asad was very frank, and the Jordanian monarch said all he wanted to say about Syria clearly, especially with regard to the numerous attempts to undermine security in Jordan, attempts which originated from and were sponsored by Syria. Meanwhile the Syrian president presented his country's view of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty and its effect on Syria's negotiating position.

The authoritative sources said that during the Husayn-al-Asad meeting, which was attended by President Mubarak, Jordanian Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti presented a summary of the Jordanian dossier carried by King Husayn to the summit, which contained a list of incidents, supported by documents and photographs, concerning the attempts to carry out subversive actions in Jordan. The sources added that King Husayn asked the prime minister to do this and the prime minister left the room later, leaving King Husayn and Presidents al-Asad and Mubarak on their own. The Egyptian president left the meeting a few minutes later to give King Husayn and President al-Asad the chance to talk privately.

The sources pointed out that Jordan expects Syria — on direct orders from President al-Asad — to take measures to prevent individuals or groups from going to Jordan to carry out actions aimed at disrupting Jordanian security or to carry out subversive operations there. [passage omitted]

Jordan: Prime Minister—Syrian President To Look into 'Sabotage' Attempts

JN2606090496 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 26 Jun 96 pp 1, 7

[Report by Tariq al-Momani "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—His Majesty King Husayn handed Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad a full dossier about attempts by Syrian-based terrorist organisations to carry out sabotage activities in Jordan but the Syrian President denied any knowledge of the matter and promised to look into the case, Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti told lawmakers on Tuesday. [25 June]

In a briefing to members of the Lower House of Parliament on the outcome of the Cairo Arab summit meeting, Mr. al-Kabariti said that in his meeting with President al-Asad on Saturday [22 June] the King recalled that Jordan stopped sabotage activities that were conducted by Jordan-based Muslim brotherhood activists against Syria and noted that he expressed regret to the Syrian president then and asked president al-Asad to follow suit.

Describing the King's talks with President al-Asad as fruitful and positive, Mr. al-Kabariti said that the meeting was frank and marked the start of a new era in relations. Such meetings would continue and the two leaders could meet in the near future, he said.

Mr. al-Kabariti told the House members that in general terms the Arab summit was a "great success" and marked the start of renewed joint Arab action.

At the meeting held at the Hall of Pictures, Mr. al-Kabariti said: "The summit witnessed open and frank

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discussions at the plenary session and during the side meetings between the leaders. Jordan is satisfied with what has been achieved and believes that the achievement at the summit will promote the Middle East peace process and builds on what has been accomplished so far and at the same time reestablish solidarity among the Arab countries."

"Indeed the summit thawed the chill in relations among the Arab states and this is a very important step in the right direction for safeguarding the higher Arab interests," said Mr. al-Kabariti.

"The Arab leaders are convinced that unification of Arab ranks and end to internal differences constitute the appropriate way for helping the nation to regain its usurped rights," he added.

Following the meeting House speaker Sa'd Hayil Srur said that "Mr. al-Kabariti reviewed efforts by King Husayn and President Mubarak towards reconciliation among Arabs and their efforts yielded good results."

"The prime minister stressed that the peace process will continue adding that Jordan supports a comprehensive peace on all tracks," added Mr. Surur.

He said that the question of external threats posed to Arab countries was taken up by the leaders during the summit, which reaffirmed its condemnation to all forms of terrorism.

Islamic Action Front party member Bassam al-'Umush described the meeting with the prime minister as positive and fruitful.

"Mr. al-Kabariti answered questions put to him and outlined the outcome of the Cairo summit," he said. We in the Islamic Action Front party welcome any Arab meeting because it signals a healthy sign and a step in the right direction."

Mr. al-'Umush quoted Mr. al-Kabariti as saying that Jordan had no hand in the exclusion of Iraq from the summit, adding that the summit could not have been convened had Iraq been invited due to the sensitivities of some Arab States.

Mr. al-Kabariti stressed that Jordan had made its stand clear vis-a-vis the Iranian interference in Arab affairs and the recent events in Bahrain noting that Iran continues to occupy islands belong to the United Arab Emirates, he said. "Iran is an occupying country that poses a threat to the Arab Nation particularly the Gulf states," Mr. al-'Umush said.

He said the prime minister considered Turkey's alliance with other countries as not directed against any Arab state, including Syria.

Another Islamic Action Front party member Ahmad al-Kasasbah quoted Mr. al-Kabariti as saying that the King's efforts succeeded in bringing together the Egyptian and Sudanese Presidents following a period of strained relations between their countries.

He said the deputies of the opposition bloc in Parliament have voiced their criticism of the summit's communique because, they said, it did not send a strong message to Israel.

Later on Tuesday, Mr. al-Kabariti briefed the Cabinet on the Arab summit meeting's talks and King Husayn's meetings with Arab leaders on the sidelines of the summit.

Mr. al-Kabariti voiced satisfaction over the outcome of the summit and paid tribute to King Husayn's "wise leadership and untiring efforts that brought about the success of the summit to serve the Arab Nation, helped (the summit) adopt a unified stand towards all issues, to support the peace parch and enhance cooperation among the Arabs," the Jordan News Agency, PETRA, said.

Acting Minister of Information Nasir al-Lawzi told reporters after the session: "The Jordanian and Syrian leaderships will follow up their meetings and dialogue to reach a suitable level of coordination that would serve both Jordan and Syria."

Mr. al-Lawzi said the meeting between the King and President al-Asad was "successful and will contribute to following up further meetings and opening dialogue".

On the U.N. sanctions on Libya, Mr. al-Lawzi said Jordan "will participate in efforts to lift the embargo and alleviate the suffering of our Libyan brothers." The King discussed the issue with President Mubarak as well as Libyan leaders Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi.

Jordan: Assassination Attempt Against Prince Hasan Disclosed

TA2506134996 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 23 Jun 96 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, QUDS PRESS — A high-ranking Jordanian official disclosed yesterday that there was an assassination attempt against Jordan's Crown Prince Hasan Bin-Talal, the brother of King Husayn. The Jordanian security services managed to detect it moments before the attempt was carried out. In a statement to QUDS PRESS, an authorized Jordanian source, who preferred to remain anonymous, said "that the most important terrorist operation listed in the file (given by Jordan to Egypt, as the sponsor of the summit conference) contains details of the attempt to assassinate Crown Prince Hasan using a car bomb,

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which was discovered moments before exploding." The Jordanian official said that presumably King Husayn handed Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad the security file which the Jordanian Government calls "the black" file. He added, however, that he does not know whether this file was passed or not.

Jordan: Security Detainees Retract Confessions, Claim Torture

JN2406194096 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 24 Jun 96 p 3

[Report by Rana al-Husayni; "Special to the JORDAN TIMES"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Thirteen defendants being tried at the State Security Court Sunday [23 June] retracted confessions they signed during interrogations, claiming the confessions were extracted under duress.

Seven of the 13, known as Bay'at al-Imam (pledge of allegiance to the leader), are charged with plotting to carry out extremist attacks and with illegal possession and manufacturing of explosive materials, a charge carrying the death penalty. The remaining six, all freed on bail, are charged with distributing pamphlets slanderous to His Majesty King Husayn.

All 13 defendants claimed that they were detained by the security forces and were subjected to psychological torture for more than six months before they were handed over to the State Security prosecution.

The alleged group leader, 'Isam Muhammad Tahir Muhammad, known as Abu-Muhammad al-Maqdisi, told the court that he did not keep any explosives, and that those found at his house had been planted by the security forces. The prosecution had charged that Mr. Muhammad, who is accused of being the group leader, received military training in Pakistan in 1989, and after living in Kuwait for three years, he smuggled hand grenades and mines in 1992 into Jordan and hid them in his house in Yajuze area.

At the end of the three-hour session Sunday, the seven court-appointed defence attorneys petitioned the court to call five defence witnesses to testify in the case. The attorneys also asked the court to order the concerned security departments to provide the court with information showing when the defendants were apprehended and when they were transferred to the State Security Court prosecution. Presiding Judge Yusuf Fa'uri agreed to the defence's requests and set the next session for June 29 to hear the defence witnesses.

Attorney released

Meanwhile, an attorney who was ordered detained on 13 June by the State security prosecutor on charges of slandering the King, was Wednesday [19 June] released on bail, according to his attorney Muhammad Hantush. Mr. Hantush told the Jordan Times that Muhammad Salamah Duwayk was released after a second request was made to grant him bail.

Mr. Duwayk, 42, was arrested after his neighbour complained to the authorities that he made remarks that were slanderous to the King and the government. When interrogated by the State Court prosecution, Mr. Duwayk denied making any slanderous remarks.

According to Mr. Hantush, no date has been set to start hearing the case.

Jordan: Air Force Commander on Exercises With U.S.

JN2506202096 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 25 Jun 96

[Passages within quotation marks recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Eager Tiger operation, in which Royal Jordanian Air Force [RJAF] and U.S. Air Force planes are participating, concluded today. The end of training and the Jordanian sorties was also announced. The U.S. forces participating in this operation will leave Jordan on 28 June. The RJAF commander and the U.S. Air Force commander held a news conference at martyr Muwaffaq al-Salti air base following the end of the joint exercises. The U.S. ambassador in Amman attended the news conference, which highlighted the benefits gained from these exercises. Details about the news conference are in the following report by our correspondent Jawad al-'Umari:

In a statement that he read out at the outset of the news conference, RJAF Commander Staff Major General Muhammad Khayr al-'Ababinah said that the benefits expected from the joint exercises were fully achieved. This includes familiarization with new and modern techniques to increase the effectiveness of the Air Force. This was accomplished through joint practical and technical training programs. Al-'Ababinah noted a number of important points about the exercises.

[Al-'Ababinah] "The participating U.S. planes complied with all the instructions regarding the implementation of the programs to monitor the Iraqi border. These planes only flew 50 miles or less from the Iraqi-Jordanian border. The air sorties carried out by the deployment force did not enter Iraqi air space directly from the Jordanian border. The RJAF did not take part in any of

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these air sorties over southern Iraq. All of these planes will leave the martyr pilot Muwaffaq al-Salti air base on 28 June, as scheduled.

"Our participation in the Eager Tiger Exercises yielded many benefits. The most important of these was allowing Jordanian pilots and technicians to get practical and technical field experience on the capabilities of modern planes, especially the F-16, in preparation to handle these planes as quickly as possible and reduce the cost of maintaining them in the future.

"A total of 300 air sorties were carried out within the Eager Tiger exercises. Fifty RJAF pilots had the opportunity to fly the two-seater F-16 planes and to participate in air combat exercises against other modern planes, such as the F-15."

"Furthermore, a number of engineers and technicians from various specialities were trained to perform maintenance on the F-16's and their mechanical and electronic equipment, including preparing and loading of the ammunition used on them. Also, certain modifications and renovations were done at the base facilities so that they conform with the use of the F-16's. All of these works were done by us, in cooperation with the U.S. team. The Eager Tiger exercise and the joint training with the friendly U.S. forces effectively improved the level of operational and technical performance and helped in the acquisition and exchange of new experience by both sides. This will, consequently, make it easier to incorporate and maintain the F-16's. We will obtain a squadron of these planes at the end of 1997."

Asked by our radio about the joint exercises that will precede Jordan's acquisition of an F-16 squadron at the end of 1997, the RJAF commander said:

[Al-'Ababinah] "The RJAF has a set program to train on the F-16's before they arrive in Jordan. There are set programs, set hours, theoretical training, and simulator training, after which the pilots will train on the planes themselves. All of these exercises will give us plenty of opportunity to learn every [word indistinct] and help us take the right decision to send the pilots and technicians to train on the F-16 planes."

Asked also by our radio on the level of technical and combat preparedness of the F-16's, which will enter service in the RJAF, Maj. Gen. Muhammad Khayr al-'Ababinah said:

[Al-'Ababinah] "With regard to the F-16's that Jordan will receive, these are refurbished planes and are as good as many other planes in the region. We asked for specific modifications to be made to these planes, and these will be done before they arrive in Jordan. However, I can confirm that the planes which we will receive will be in excellent condition, will have the necessary weapons, and may be much more modern that many other planes in the region."

Gen. Bill Looney, commander of the U.S. Air Force personnel participating in the Eager Tiger exercises, said that the joint exercises were successful and achieved their goals. He thanked His Majesty King Husayn for providing this opportunity for the two sides to exchange experience. He praised the high quality of the RJAF pilots, engineers, and technicians. He said the joint exercises gave the two air forces a new drive for more cooperation at the doorstep of the 21st century.

Meanwhile, the U.S. ambassador in Amman announced that U.S. forces will participate in exercises in Qatar in the near future.

[Amman Jordan Television Network in English at 1700 GMT adds the following comment by Commander al-'Ababinah: "There are no plans to do the maintenance [of the F-16's] in Israel. The aircraft will be modified, upgraded, maintained in the United States by American companies."]

Jordan: IMF Official Rules Out Reduction in Dinar Exchange Rate

JN2206180296 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 22 Jun 96 pp 1, 24

[Report by Khalid al-Zubaydi]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] 'Abd-al-Shakkur al-Sha'lan, Middle East region executive director of the IMF, ruled out any plan to reduce the exchange rate of the Jordanian dinar, asserting that Jordan's economy was growing steadily and that any rate reduction would not benefit Jordan's economy.

In an exclusive statement to AL-RA'Y, al-Sha'lan said that the IMF and the Jordanian Government were willing to reduce the interest rate on the dinar to increase investment profits. He also said that the government increased the interest rate twice to encourage investment in the dinar instead of other currencies, adding that the current stability might lead to a reduction in the Jordanian dinar's interest rate. [passage omitted]

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Lebanon: Israeli Defense Minister Visits Border Area, Comments

NC2506145996 Kafr Killa Voice of the South in Arabic 1330 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhaq Mordekhay today paid his first visit to the border area since the formation of the new Israeli cabinet. He was accompanied by the Israeli deputy chief of staff and commander of the northern zone General 'Amiram Levin. They inspected the Israeli post in al Dabshah and the Marj 'Uyun barracks.

At a news conference in Marj 'Uyun, Mordekhay said: I have decided that my first visit to the army will be to one of the advanced posts in Lebanon. I have found in this post organized soldiers who know that the main aim of our presence in south Lebanon is to provide security to the population of the northern borders, support the border area and its population, and protect the soldiers of the Israeli army and the South Lebanese Army [SLA].

Mordekhay stressed that efforts will continue against the militia of the Iranian-Syrian enemy, saying: Our aim and task is to reduce the danger posed by Hizballah to the border area and north Israel. He said there are no red lines, as red lines may change with circumstances.

Discussing the repeated violations by the militia of the Iranian-Syrian enemy of the April understanding and their resumption of their operations just like before Operation Grapes of Wrath, Mordekhay said the Israeli Staff Command is considering these issues and when we see a need to take certain action against the terrorists, we will not hesitate.

In response to a question by our correspondent, Mordekhay said: Israel's conditions for withdrawal from the border area have not changed. We will stay in this area as long as necessary in fulfillment of the commitments we made to provide security to the population of the northern zone and our friends in the border area. He said: If the Lebanese Government and those who stand behind it show the capability of preventing terrorists from carrying out operations against the Israeli army and the SLA, then we can sit at the negotiating table and reach agreements. He said: We wish the Lebanese Government was independent and showed the ability to deal with problems. Had it been so, we would have been able to sit together and reach solutions. He said: The Lebanese Government should show it is capable of dealing with Lebanon's real problems.

Lebanon: Cabinet Approves Bill Amending Election Law

NC2406200196 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1915 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] In an extraordinary session today, the Cabinet approved a bill amending some articles of the Election Law.

Interior Minister Michel al-Murr announced that the Cabinet had agreed to maintain the present number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies. He said that the bill does not refer to any increase, decrease, or redistribution of seats.

Al-Murr, who was reading the text of the Cabinet resolutions adopted today, declared that the Bayrut, al-Janub, al-Shamal, and al-Biqa' Governorates will each be considered as one electoral constituency.

In answer to a question, Minister al-Murr explained that exceptions are justified because conditions have not returned to normal in some Lebanese areas. He said that justice lies in giving every candidate an equal chance.

He reported that the president is in possession of a paper sent to him by the opposition through an intermediary and that this paper supports the proposal of considering each district in the Jabal Lubnan Governorate as a separate constituency.

The interior minister added: In order to protect freedom, the government has decided to give all candidates an opportunity to appear on the private media and submit their ideas and platforms.

He said that as a first step the election bill will be referred to the Chamber of Deputies in the next two days.

He noted that in the case of the Jabal Lubnan Governorate, where the districts will each be regarded as a separate electoral constituency, the term "for one last time" has been deleted. This means that the bill permanently enshrines the division of this governorate into smaller electoral districts.

During the Cabinet meeting, Foreign Minister Fariz Buwayz objected to some articles in the bill. Ministers Michel Iddih and Pierre Far'un also expressed reservations.

The Cabinet gave state employees, judges, and employees of semi- governmental departments a period of one month to submit their resignations from their posts if they want to run as candidates.

The Cabinet suspended the use of the old election cards.

The term of the new Chamber of Deputies will, for this one time only, be four years and eight months.

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Syria: Al-Shar' Briefs Cabinet on 'Positive' Arab Summit Results

JN2506145696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi presided over a meeting of the council of ministers at 1100 today. The ministers discussed Arab and international developments. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' gave a full review of the latest developments, as well as the positive and significant results of the Arab summit in Cairo.

Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs, briefed the council on the outcome of the tour he and a ministerial delegation made to the northern and eastern governorates to follow up on the process of marketing grains and to inspect the efficiency of some production projects. The cabinet also reviewed the work of the services and economic committees, discussed topics listed on the agenda, and made the appropriate decisions.

Syria: Cairo Summit Said To 'Open the Door Wide' to Peace

JN2506151696 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1142 GMT 25 Jun 96

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gentlemen: The results of the Arab summit in Cairo are still reverberating in international capitals. These results have captured the attention of all political quarters, especially those concerned with the Middle East peace process. The Arab leaders came out with a unified position on the issues they addressed, the foremost of which are achieving a just and comprehensive peace, asserting the Madrid formula, invigorating joint Arab action, and bolstering the role of the Arab League. This convinced everybody that the Arabs have overcome fragmentation and divisions, restored solidarity, and are determined to achieve their rights in full.

The Cairo summit has paved the way for a new stage of Arab action characterized by solidarity, brotherhood, coordination, consultation, and not abandoning a single iota of soil or any of the nation's rights. The summit championed Syria and its just demands that call for the full restoration of the occupied Golan and Israel's withdrawal to the 4 June 1967 lines. The summit also championed Lebanon when it demanded Israel's full and unconditional withdrawal from southern Lebanon and western al-Biqa' and stop its barbaric attacks against this Arab country. Likewise, the summit championed the Palestinian people and their legitimate rights to the restoration of all their territories, including Jerusalem, and to establish their independent state. The summit championed the cause of peace on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy, the Madrid conference foundations, and the land-for-peace principle. The summit warned Israel of the consequences of abandoning these principles. It also warned Israel against persisting in settlement activity. The Arab leaders threatened to reconsider the steps taken so far if the Israeli Government does not comply with the process of a just and comprehensive peace, in letter and spirit.

The Israeli Government thought that it would be possible to isolate Syria and Lebanon and continue with its Judaization of the Golan, while continuing to normalize relations with the other Arab countries. However, it became evident that Syria occupies a central place in the hearts of all Arabs and that the Golan is in the conscience of every Arab official and citizen. It also became clear that without Syria, there can never be any peace in the region. The summit fully endorsed Syria's arguments and constants toward peace, since these arguments are based on Arab rights and international legitimacy. The time of procrastination and temporization is over. Israel must engage in the peace process and respond to its requirements and foundations, primarily full withdrawal. Otherwise, the peace process will collapse, and Israel will be held responsible — in front of the whole world — for this collapse and the serious consequences it will produce for the region and the world.

Syria, and President al-Asad, played a major role in making the summit a success. President al-Asad is truly an advocate of pan-Arab solidarity. He has never stopped — not even for a single day — warning of the consequences of disunity and departure from the unity of ranks and objectives. President al-Asad was the first to call for the summit and make successful preparations for it. Prior to the summit, he made every possible effort and lengthy contacts with Arab leaders. He continued these contacts in Cairo to clear the air and remove all obstacles to Arab agreement. The strength of the Arabs lies in their unity and solidarity, and the freedom of the Arabs lies in their strength. There is no alternative to giving precedence to the nation's interests over immediate gains, selfishness, and sensitivities.

The Arabs responded sincerely to these great efforts, having realized that Israel is following a policy of deceptive maneuvers and that its aim is to swallow up the territory, not to achieve peace. Thus, the summit succeeded and was crowned with clear pan-Arab decisions that will lay the groundwork for a new stage of solidarity and enable the Arabs to live up to the challenges.

The whole world is talking publicly today about its conviction that the Arabs are advocates of a just peace

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and that the Arab summit did not close any door to peace, as Israel contends. In fact, the summit opened the door wide to the peace process, in accordance with the Madrid foundations and the resolutions of international legitimacy. The ball is now in the Israeli court. The Tel Aviv government should prove to the international community that it wants peace, not expansion and challenging international legitimacy.

Syria: Editor Comments on Netanyahu Remarks With Christopher

JN2606103596 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0730 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] Damascus, 26 Jun (SANA) — In the "Together on the Road" column by SANA Director General Fayiz al-Sayigh, AL-THAWRAH newspaper says: Binyamin Netanyahu has once again confirmed his extremist identity, settlement ambitions, and security theory when he called for a feverish increase in settlement activity in a brazen manner that has not been seen in the region for a long time, especially in light of international trends to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region. The strange thing about Netanyahu's statement this time is that he made it outside the context of election propaganda and in front of the secretary of state of the main sponsor of the peace process, the United States. The statement in front of the U.S. secretary implies that the U.S. Administration does not oppose this policy, since it did not say directly and in front of Arab and world public opinion that it has reservations about this policy.

The newspaper wonders: What will the U.S. secretary say at his next stop? How will the U.S. Administration translate its conviction about achieving a just and comprehensive peace, its responsibility toward achieving it, and credibility toward the implementation of the resolutions of international legitimacy?

The newspaper says: In their final communique at the Cairo summit, the Arabs gave their best offer to advance the peace process and protect it from what is being planned against it. The Arabs declared before the entire world a responsible, strategic option, stemming from their responsibility toward the requirements of peace and legitimate rights.

The newspaper urges the world to champion and protect the principles that allow the achievement of a comprehensive peace and to put all kinds of pressure on the other party to make it comply with the will of the international community and not allow it to go too far in its defiance of international legitimacy. Netanyahu's extremist policy will endanger the interests of the whole world. This requires a unified position and siding by justice in the face of this ugly falsehood that has reared its head from the Israeli window to threaten the stability of the region and the world.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The Arabs proved through their summit that they are more capable of grasping the facts of life and dealing with these facts seriously to place the world before its responsibilities to confront all threats to peace and security, whether these threats are the result of expansionist ambitions or a lack of understanding of these facts.

The newspaper urges the Arabs to strengthen their cohesion, bolster their solidarity, unify their positions, and responsibly implement the decisions and recommendations made by the Cairo summit in light of the current circumstances and developments. The paper notes that Netanyahu insists on pushing the current situation toward a dangerous abyss.

The newspaper concludes: Defending peace is not only an Arab responsibility, but is also an international responsibility, especially the responsibility of the main sponsor, which admits that peace and occupation are irreconcilable.

Syria: PRC's Bangguo Interviewed on Bilateral Relations, Taiwan

JN2206102696 Damascus AL-BA'TH in Arabic 14 May 96 p 3

[Interview with Wu Bangguo, vice chairman of the PRC State Council, by Dr. Khalil Jawad; place and date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Jawad] Syria and China are linked by cordial ties of friendship and cooperation aimed at developing relations of cooperation between their two countries and expanding their horizons in the future.

[Wu] Chinese-Syrian relations of friendship go far back into history. The year 1996 marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. During these 40 years, our two countries have exchanged support and assistance and have established effective cooperation in international and bilateral relations. The Chinese side is very satisfied with these relations.

On this occasion, we would like to express our profound thanks to friendly Syria for its cooperation and support for us in the international struggle within the UN agencies to foil the Western states' draft resolution against China on the human rights issue. We would also like to express our cordial thanks to friendly Syria for its adherence to the principled stand represented by one

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China and its support for our country on the question of the peaceful unification of our homeland. It is also understood that China—government and people—has always extended its firm support to the Syrian and Arab peoples in their just stand to regain their occupied territories and national rights.

It is a pleasure that in recent years, and thanks to the common efforts by both sides, the relations of friendship and cooperation between our two countries have witnessed constant development. There has been excellent cooperation in the political, economic, trade, cultural, and other fields. The two sides have also opened up new fields of cooperation. My present visit is aimed at continuing mutual visits at the highest levels, expanding the horizon of cordial cooperation, and strengthening comprehensive development in bilateral relations. The Chinese Government is greatly interested in developing Chinese-Syrian relations.

I had the great honor of meeting with His Excellency President Hafiz al-Asad. We spoke at length on the strengthening of relations between our two countries. I also met with comrade 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party; Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi; 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, speaker of the People's Assembly; and Sulayman Qaddah, assistant secretary of the Regional Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party. I also held talks with Deputy Prime Minister Dr. Salim Yasin and other Syrian officials. We exchanged views on bilateral relations and international and regional issues of mutual concern. We widened our agreement on all the issues discussed. Useful consultations also took place between Syrian economists and the Chinese businessmen who are accompanying me on this visit to find new ways to expand economic and trade cooperation between the two countries.

Both China and Syria are developing countries. Both of them are facing the task of developing their economies and improving the living standards of their peoples. Moreover, both countries are currently engaged in economic reform. Therefore, it is essential to exchange experiences and skills in these fields in order to achieve common development. I am completely confident that China and Syria have a wider scope for developing useful cooperation for both sides in the economic, trade, and other fields. [passage omitted]

[Jawad] China is known for its international stand in support of just causes. What is your assessment of the recent Israeli aggression against Lebanon, especially the Qana massacre and Israel's refusal to continue the peace process on the basis of international resolutions?

[Wu] China truly and sincerely hopes that the Middle East region will achieve peace soon. China is not after any special interest in this region. We have always supported the Middle East peace process and have called for a resolution of the Middle East problem and the achievement of a political solution on the basis of the declared UN resolutions, including Resolutions 242 and 338.

Syria is a very influential state in the region. It plays an important role in tackling the affairs of the region and achieving a comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem. China expresses its appreciation and support for the principled Syrian stand on the achievement of just and comprehensive peace through peaceful negotiations and on the basis of the resolutions of international legitimacy. As a permanent member state of the UN Security Council, China will continue its efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive solution of the Middle East problem as soon as possible.

In mid-April, southern Lebanon and the outskirts of Beirut were exposed to continuous Israeli raids. We followed those incidents with great concern and strongly regretted that Lebanon's sovereignty and territorial integrity were exposed to violation and aggression, which led to the fall of many victims and great material losses. We denounce any act that violates international legitimacy. The Chinese representative to the Security Council urged Israel to put an immediate end to all military operations and called upon all parties concerned to reach an immediate cease-fire, exercise self-restraint, and maintain calm in order to avoid any action that might harm the peace process in the Middle East. He also called for the resolution of all disputes between them through dialogue and consultation in order to maintain peace and stability in the region. We hope that the Middle East peace process will resume as soon as possible.

[Jawad] What are the prospects of relations between China and Taiwan, especially following the recent crisis in the Strait of Taiwan?

[Wu] The tension that is being witnessed in the Strait of Taiwan is entirely the outcome of the separatist activities of the local Taiwanese authorities, whose aim is to create two Chinas or one China and one Taiwan internationally.

The whole world knows that there is only one China, the People's Republic of China, and that the Island of Taiwan is an indivisible part of China. No matter how the officials on the Island of Taiwan change their choice methods, this will not change the fact that Taiwan is part of the territories of China. It will also not change another fact; namely, that the officials on the Island of

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Taiwan are only local officials in one of the regions of China.

The question of the unification of both sides of the Strait of Taiwan is one of the internal issues of China. No state has no right to interfere in it. No one also has the right to make any impudent remarks when China carries out its military exercises for the sake of protecting the sovereignty of the state. It is obvious that China is right on this subject. The United States sent its aircraft carriers in support of the Taiwanese authorities at the time when China was carrying out its military exercises, which revealed the evil intention of the United States to interfere in China's internal affairs and hamper the process of unifying China.

The basic policies that China pursues on the question of Taiwan are: the achievement of unification peacefully, the application of the policy of "one state with two systems," and the nonwilligness to promise to give up the use of force in order to achieve that. If the Taiwanese authorities and all the political forces inside Taiwan are able to return to the principle of "one China," give up the demand for the independence of Taiwan, and stop all activities toward separation from the motherland; and if, at the same time, foreign forces also stop interfering in Taiwan's internal affairs, it will be possible to unify the homeland gradually through peaceful negotiations. But as long as there are activities that seek to create "two Chinas" or "one China and one Taiwan" or the independence of Taiwan one day, we will never stop the struggle against the independence of Taiwan and the separatist activities. The unification of China is great historic aim that cannot be resisted by any force, and we are completely confident of that.

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Afghanistan

Afghanistan: 'Powerful Militia Commander' Assassinated

LD2506173396 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] A militia commander by the name of Rasul Pahlawan was killed in Mazar-e Sharif yesterday [24 June]. Security sources told BAKHTAR today that the commander was killed along with 15 of his bodyguards during an ambush yesterday morning. Their bodies were taken to Faryab Province today.

Rasul Pahlawan was a powerful militia commander, who was said to be a strong rival of General Dostam. His brother, Abdol Malek, is in charge of foreign relations for the militia. Rasul Pahlawan wanted to replace Dostam with his brother.

Abdol Malek is currently on an official visit to the United States. General Dostam was in Tashkent when the assassination occurred. He returned to Mazar-e Sharif after Rasul Pahlawan's death.

Rasul Pahlawan, who commanded a militia division during the old regime, was known for his ruthlessness and for killing people. He controlled more (?areas) than other militia commanders. The Afghan embassy and a German news agency confirmed the death of Pahlawan. Unconfirmed reports say that foreign aid agencies have withdrawn their staff from Mazar-e Sharif.

India

India: Official Warns Against Possible 'Disguised' CTBT Treaty

BK2506131496 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 24 Jun 96 pp 1,9

[Report by Chitra Subramaniam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India today warned against moves aimed at linking the CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty] to its presence in it through disguised treaty formulations.

Chief Indian negotiator Arundhati Ghosh said efforts were afoot to force New Delhi to accept a CTBT through the disguise of a clause listing a group of countries including India in the section which determined the number of ratifications necessary for the CTBT to enter into force (EIF). If this formulation was passed India would have no option but to comply, its unaddressed security concerns notwithstanding. At a closed-door meeting Ghosh said the obvious conclusion was that those who do not want a CTBT were making the "Indian question" a big issue, since New Delhi was not planning to block the treaty, but only wanted to be out of it in its current form.

Russia and China, also Pakistan and Egypt (for Israel) are insisting on a formula which would require the five-nuclear weapons states plus the three "threshold" states — India, Israel, Pakistan — to ratify the treaty for it to become effective.

"If such moves persist, India would have no option but to withdraw its International Monitoring Stations (IMS), and this will be done through a simple letter to the chairman of the talks," Ghosh said.

India is offering five facilities under the CTBT's IMS architecture that will oversee compliance with the treaty. "We are not blocking the treaty, we are negotiating our security concerns which have been ignored. How can we be expected to accept something just because our name is in it," Ghosh told THE INDIAN EXPRESS.

A senior European diplomat from a non-nuclear weapons state said India had stirred up a hornets' nest by its "won't block, will negotiate" position as that had forced the P-5 to show their hand.

"Things look bleak," he said in response to a question on the P-5 reaching an agreement as was rumoured throughout last weekend when the five were locked in endless hours of negotiations. Diplomats say countries including some in the P-5 were hoping India would walk as that would give them someone to blame for the failed talks.

That option has disappeared and attention has now shifted to intra-P-5 squabbling where the three Western states — US, UK and France — are pitted against China and Russia not only on verification (this is an old sore point between the US and Russia and now between China and US) but also on the EIF.

The US, diplomats said, was willing to go along with the "CTBT now, pressure later" formula on grounds that the force of the international regime in addition to inducements could be used to bring in possible holdouts like India.

The Indian warning came as the Dutch Chairman of the talks Jaap Ramaker presented a new text in the form of additions and deletions to his earlier May 28 text hoping to work out a deal by the June 28 deadline. He told negotiators and later journalists that he had not been able to find a solution to the EIF issue and left it to countries to find a solution before Friday. [28 June]

"This is a real dilemma," he said at a press conference where he conceded that his amended text did not meet India's demands for a pledge to work towards total nuclear disarmament.

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"The current scope language stays," he added, saying that it was a direct denial of India's call that the scope of the treaty (which now banned nuclear explosions only) must ban explosive as well as non-explosive blasts.

Ramaker denied suggestions that the P-5 had reached a deal over the weekend which would be spread to the rest and pointed to deep divisions between the nuclear powers. He said on verification and EIF, the five remained "opposed," and that he would concentrate on the former in the time he had between now and Friday. The chairman said had he come out with a formulation on the EIF today.

Following India's opposition to the current text, Ramaker last Thursday [20 June] proposed a complicated formula according to which the CTBT would enter into force if it was ratified by the 37 countries (who have IMS) or a straight numerical majority of 75, whichever comes first.

Meanwhile, ambassadors from 18 countries issued a joint declaration expressing their "deep concern" over the fundamental challenges to a completion of the treaty on deadline.

India: Official Proposes Modeling CTBT After CWC

BK2506144496 Madras THE HINDU in English 25 Jun 96 p 1

[Article by C. Raja Mohan]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reaffirming its opposition to a global ban on nuclear testing in the current form, India cautioned the Conference on Disarmament here not to link the implementation of the treaty to its signature. As diplomats from 61 countries race against time to finalise the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty [CTBT], the Indian Ambassador, Ms. Arundhati Ghose, told the conference on Monday [24 June] that tying the treaty's operation to India's signature raises questions about the real commitment of certain countries to get a CTBT.

India's intervention came in the wake of the presentation of a new draft of the CTBT text by the chairman of the negotiating group, Ambassador Jaap Ramaker of the Netherlands. The new text came only with minor modifications reflecting the failure of the negotiators, particularly from the five nuclear powers, to resolve their outstanding differences on a number of key provisions.

The divisions are particularly acute on the so-called "entry-into-force" provisions of the CTBT. Four nuclear powers — Russia, China, Britain and France — along with Pakistan and some Arab states are adamant that the treaty should not be implemented until the three threshold countries — India, Pakistan and Israel — also joined the treaty.

After India declared last week that it will not sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in the current form Mr. Ramaker has been attempting to devise alternative formulas for the implementation of the treaty. He has suggested that the treaty enter force five years after it is opened for signature even if all the nuclear capable countries have not joined it. While the United States is willing to consider the new proposal, the other nuclear weapon powers and Pakistan have been recalcitrant.

There was expectation here that after intensive consultations over the weekend, the P-5 would resolve their differences on entry-into-force, as well as on other contentious issues such as special inspections and peaceful nuclear explosions. An agreement among them appears to have been elusive casting a shadow over the prospects for finalising the treaty this week.

But in an attempt to force the pace of the negotiations, Mr. Ramaker has asserted his determination to bring the negotiations to a close this week. Addressing a press conference, Mr. Ramaker said giving additional time is unlikely to help resolve the remaining differences.

Meanwhile a group of 18 countries, Western and pro-Western, have demanded that the negotiations "produce an effective Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty by June 28", a self-imposed deadline. Disarmament ambassadors from 18 countries including Germany, Canada, Italy, Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, Norway, Belgium, Spain, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, Switzerland and Chile, called on all negotiators in a joint statement, "to take the necessary political decisions to enable" the finalisation of the CTBT. "No one state or group of states should seek to thwart that conclusion," they declared.

In a separate statement, Greenpeace said that "U.K., China, Russia, and Pakistan must compromise on Entry-into-Force provisions if the world is to have a CTBT ready for signing this year." Mr. Joshua Handler of the environmental and peace organisation said, "there is no point trying to bully India into being part of a treaty that does not meet India's critical concerns. The best solution would be a simpler Entry-into-Force provision that includes the big five nuclear weapon states together with some 30-40 unspecified states, and make a stronger commitment to nuclear disarmament."

If the negotiators cannot solve the problems by Thursday, [26 June] Greenpeace said, it "will be looking for last minute intervention" by the leaders of the key nuclear and industrial states at the G-7 meeting in Lyon, France later this week to get the CTBT. "Clinton,

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Chirac, Major, and company could solve these remaining problems in an instant", Greenpeace said.

As pressures build up for an early CTBT, there is some hope yet that the five nuclear weapon powers will come to some agreement in the next couple of days. Intensified diplomacy in the capitals of the negotiating countries is expected to produce the final momentum behind the CTBT.

Meanwhile there is grumbling among the non-aligned countries that the real negotiations are taking place outside the conference among the great powers. "They are making deals with each other behind our backs", a non-aligned diplomat told THE HINDU. If and when the P-5 produce the final deal, the non-aligned may not be able to put up much resistance.

Conditions Rejected From Our Special Correspondent

India today rejected western conditions that the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) will not be finalised without New Delhi's acquiescence. But, the CTBT could be modelled on the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), banning all chemical weapons, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Salman Haidar said.

The Foreign Secretary made these observations at a press conference in response to a corrigenda released by the five nuclear powers in Geneva earlier today.

According to him, the informal proposals failed to address India's key concerns on the treaty's scope, suggestions on disarmament and "entry-into-force", raised Thursday last. There was no question of accepting any clause which did not address India's national security concerns, he said.

The Foreign Secretary, referred to the Chemical Weapons Convention as a possible model for the CTBT. On "the specific provision of the entry-into-force... we have made our proposals."

Our approach to the entry-into-force is quite clear of not (insisting) countries or a group of countries sign and ratify, but there should be participation by sufficient number of countries. (These could be) similar in nature as in the CWC which does not specify participation by any group of countries", Mr. Haidar added.

According to senior officials, India was fundamentally opposed to the present "entry-into-force" proposal. "After Thursday (we made) it abundantly clear that we cannot sign the treaty in its present form. It is therefore natural that the entry-into-force formulation should not include India."

National security concerns were overriding, the Foreign Secretary said in response to a question on whether New Delhi's recent decisions could block the treaty. "Our approach is to see that national interest and national security are not compromised. What others say is not the determining question", he observed.

The Foreign Secretary today acknowledged that the western powers were unlikely to accommodate India on the treaty's scope and disarmament demands.

Despite its serious objections, India today renewed its pledge to continue participation in the CTBT negotiations. "We will remain engaged (and ensure) that nothing in the text, contrary to national security interests is retained", Mr. Haidar said.

India: Central Government To Continue Open Sky Policy

BK2306101996 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The central government has decided to continue the open sky policy. This was stated by the union minister for civil aviation, Mr. C.M. Ibrahim, in Gulbarga, Karnataka today. The minister added that Air India and Indian Airlines will continue to have autonomy.

India: Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Comments on Outcome of Talks

BK2206101696 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India has assured Sri Lanka of substantial assistance in the rehabilitation plan for Jaffna, according to the Sri Lankan foreign minister, Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, who briefed newspersons this afternoon at the end of his goodwill visit to New Delhi. Bilateral relations, regional issues, and the current situation in Sri Lanka figured in his talks with a cross-section of Indian leaders, including the prime minister and the external affairs minister. Our correspondent Chandralekha reports:

[Begin recording] [Chandralekha] The first foreign minister to pay a goodwill visit to the new government in New Delhi, Mr. Kadirgamar had reasons to be satisfied with his visit. Not only did he find the Indo-Sri Lankan relations in an exceptionally good state, he also found encouraging the prime minister Mr. Deve Gowda's response to his government's $274 million rehabilitation plan for Jaffna, to which 400,000 people have now returned:

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[Kadirgamar] Prime minister's response was very, very encouraging and I have expectations that at least India will be prepared to send us food [words indistinct].

[Chandralekha] The terrorist menace in the subcontinent was not discussed, but the travails of the fishermen in the two countries did come up and struck a positive cord in the host country:

[Kadirgamar] They are very anxious to see that some good mechanism is set up whereby we can have a continuous dialogue with the government of India. The foreign minister of India, Mr. Gujral, told me at our first meeting yesterday that he has recommended the release of some 25 or 30 fishermen — Sri Lankan fishermen — who have been arrested by the Indian authorities.

[Chandralekha] Denying that Pakistan had sought third party intervention in resolving Indo-Pak issues, Mr. Kadirgamar clarified the Sri Lankan stand:

[Kadirgamar] Sri Lanka believes that outstanding problems between our two great neighbors should be resolved by them bilaterally within the framework of the Simla Agreement.

[Chandralekha] Mr. Kadirgamar also assured India of Sri Lanka's support in India's bid for a nonpermanent [as heard] seat in the UN Security Council. [end recording]

India: Defense Minister Visits Troops in 'Forward Areas' of Kashmir

BK2606041796 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The defense minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, has said India will not bow down to any international pressure on security matters. Addressing a press conference in Jammu today after his visit to forward areas in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr. Yadav said the country's security will continue to remain a priority area and under no circumstances will security measures be diluted. He reiterated that nobody can force India to sign the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Earlier in the morning, Mr. Yadav visited a forward post in the Akhnur Sector and spent time with the troops. Our correspondent Rudranath Sanyal, who accompanied the minister, reports that Mr. Yadav assured the troops that the Center would make all possible efforts for the welfare of the Armed Forces personnel. [video shows Yadav addressing the troops, but audio is indistinct]

Yesterday the minister had visited two more forward posts in the high altitudes of Jammu and Kashmir. Our correspondent reports that Pakistani troops have been opening fire regularly in these areas. Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav addressed the troops in both the places.

India: Parties React To Minister's Remarks on Kashmir Autonomy

BK2506163296 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The defense minister, Mr. Mulayam Singh Yadav, now on a tour of Jammu and Kashmir, has said that a meeting of various state-level political parties will be held soon to discuss the issue of granting greater autonomy to the state. He said this will be followed by discussions with national parties on the subject. Mr. Yadav said the United Front government wants to strengthen Article 370 of the Constitution [granting special status to Jammu and Kashmir state] to find a solution to the problems faced by the state.

The Congress today declined to comment on the defense minister's statement yesterday that the government will introduce a bill in Parliament to give maximum autonomy to Jammu and Kashmir. The party spokesman said the Congress will give its reaction when the government spells out the extent of autonomy.

The CPI-M [Communist Party of India-Marxist] on the other hand says it is not in favor of giving greater autonomy to the state before the assembly elections. The party's politburo member, Mr. Sitaram Yachuri, said in Chandigarh that the state assembly should pass a resolution to this effect which should be ratified by Parliament.

The BJP's [Bharatiya Janata Party] Central Parliamentary Board member, Mr. Rajkripal, has described as suicidal the reported move to grant more autonomy to the state. He said the BJP is for decentralization of power, but it should be applicable to all states.

Iran

Iran: Tehran Radio Reports Dhahran Explosion

LD2606082696 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0230 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The explosion at a military complex in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, last night of a fuel tanker containing a bomb inflicted heavy casualties and damage on the American troops based at the complex. [passage omitted]

Following the explosion, the U.S. President condemned the bombing and threatened that its perpetrators will not go unpunished. No one has claimed responsibility for the explosion thus far. Some time ago, following the

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execution of four people accused of placing a bomb at a training center for that country's National Guard last November, a group opposed to Riyadh announced that it would avenge their death.

Iran: Majles Speaker Condemns U.S. Congress Bill on Iran

LD2506173696 Tehran IRNA in English 1717 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 25, IRNA — Speaker of the Iranian Majles (parliament) Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri today condemned the recent 3bill passed by the U.S. House of Representatives against foreign companies doing business with Islamic Iran and dismissed it as "ineffective".

Addressing the Tuesday [25 June] session of Majles, Nateq-Nuri said that Washington's aim was to cripple Iranian economy to the satisfaction of the Zionists.

He said that it was a matter of regret for the U.S. nation that its Congress and administration resort to such measures against the Iranian nation in order to win Zionist votes in the upcoming elections.

However, the speaker felt confident that American attempts were bound to fail in view of the excellent cooperation of the Iranian people with the government and the Majles.

Iran's oil situation in the world market has ameliorated and stands well beyond the figures predicted by the second five-year development plan (1995-2000) and the budget, he noted.

Referring to the success of iranian oil experts over the recent years, Nateq-Nuri said that in the light of these facts, the Islamic Republic has a say in the world, enabling it to confront world arrogance.

Iran: Israel Using 'Criminal' Methods To Disrupt U.S.-Arab Ties

LD2606085596 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0345 GMT 26 Jun 96

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] Warren Christopher's efforts during his current visit to the Middle East to underline that relations between the United States and the Zionist regime are strategic in nature are seen as a repetition of old statements that are now being uttered in changed circumstances; especially so because [Binyamin] Netanyahu, as the leader of the Zionist extremists, has been unwilling to discuss his cabinet's plans with the U.S. secretary of state.

There is no doubt that Washington is not expecting the Arabs and, especially, the heads of the countries that took part in the Cairo summit to do any more than they have already done by way of cooperation.

In the meantime, there are also equations beyond the current diplomatic developments and comings and goings which speak of changing relations between the different Zionist factions and the escalation of their disputes.

It is inevitable that, in the current circumstances, the U.S. Democratic Party is not only trying to pretend, on the face of the matter, that the process of compromise in the Middle East is active, but is hoping to establish some kind of new relations with the more powerful Zionist factions in view of the change in the behind the scenes equations between the Zionists.

Of course, Washington is aware that, in the current circumstances, the Zionists are unhappy about any greater closeness between Arabic fronts and the United States, and they [the Zionists] will not refrain from carrying out any action, even criminal ones, to break up the relations between the Arabs and Washington.

In the meantime, on the other side of the coin, there are the designs that are being exchanged for blackmail purposes and the demands for greater concessions by the Zionists; an effort that, placing emphasis on the demands of Islamic fundamentalism on American interests, takes the form of secret activities [as heard].

Iran: Tehran Protests to UN Over Iraqi Violations of Airspace

LD2506072896 Tehran IRNA in English 0639 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] United Nations, N.Y., June 25, IRNA — The Islamic Republic of Iran lodged a protest against violation of its airspace by the allied forces operating in Iraq and called on the U.N. chief to intervene and stop these violations.

The permanent representative of Iran to the U.N., Kamal Kharazi, in a letter to Butrus Butrus-Ghali on Monday [24 June] listed four cases of violation during the period of December 30, 1995-January 14, 1996.

Kharazi in his letter drew the attention of the U.N. chief "to a further disturbing situation where the airplanes of the allied forces operating in Iraq violated the airspace of the Islamic Republic of Iran." He urged Butrus-Ghali to take appropriate measures to stop such practices by the allied forces operating in Iraq.

In each of the first two cases of the cease-fire violations, eight airplanes of the allied forces violated the

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northwestern airspace of the Islamic Republic of Iran on December 30, 1995, while in each of the other two cases one allied forces' plane was involved in the violation that took place on January 14, 1996.

Iran: Commentary Views U.S. Policy Concerning Afghanistan

LD2306194896 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 18 Jun 96 p 12

[Political commentary: "New Calculations in Afghanistan"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The United States' interventions in Afghanistan have entered a new phase now that the leaders of some groups have been invited to Washington to discuss the struggle for power in their country.

Although the United States has not invited the leaders of some groups, because it was thought they had fundamentalist tendencies, but Washington has apparently had a very extensive spectrum of groups and tendencies in mind.

The government in Kabul has acknowledged that it has received invitations for President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Ahmad Shah Mas'ud, the military leader of the Jam'iyat-e Eslami [Islamic Society], but it has said nothing about its own reply to the invitation.

One of the figures who has not been invited to Washington, Golboddin Hekmatyar, was the first to denounce and condemn the anticipated gathering in Washington as a U.S. intervention.

Regardless of whether the Washington meeting is going to be held or not and regardless of its outcome, the important point remains that the United States has become strongly interested — an interest not evident when the Marxist regime collapsed — in Afghanistan's recent past.

Indeed, a plan by several American senators to return Mohammad Zahir Shah, the previous Afghan monarch, to power exposes these real U.S. interests.

There is now the danger that the United States will pursue its own interest through its illegitimate interventions and will make the Afghan problem even more complicated.

Some Afghan groups are now truly worried that the U.S. Government is planning to impose the plan for the return of Zahir Shah on the participants of the Washington meeting.

The coming gathering in Washington can be analyzed from two viewpoints: First, the U.S. regional interests in southwest Asia and second, the interests of the Democratic Party competing with the Republican Party in a U.S. presidential-election year.

There is no doubt that the United States pursues its own particular interests in southwest Asia as is evident in U.S.-Pakistani relations and U.S. involvement in Kashmir.

But it seems that Afghanistan has maintained its special status in the United States' regional calculations despite the ongoing war in that country.

The tendency shown by the Rabbani government toward Russia and India has probably awakened the United States to the possibility that a movement away from the West might become stronger in Afghanistan and that this could become a source of concern for the United States and its regional allies.

Furthermore, the U.S. calculations for Afghanistan and Central Asia are also influenced by the fact that the fortunes of power in Moscow are still not clear.

Therefore, if a liberal government comes into power in Afghanistan it will serve America's long-term interests. If we consider those who follow Zahir Shah's views and mostly played minor roles in Europe and America during the Afghan mojahedin wars, the issue becomes more clear. Particularly since, because of their political experience and their presence in western circles, they consider themselves the most suitable people to return and rule over Afghanistan. Of course, it is clear that those people are hoping to return to power under the banner of Zahir Shah, who is regarded as a personality who remained neutral in the Afghan civil war and has a kind of traditional following at least among the tribal groups. The raising of the Grand Assembly issue and gaining legitimacy for Zahir Shah's rule is very important within that context.

One could also assess America's attention being drawn again to Afghanistan in the context of party political rivalries in the year of presidential elections in that country. To maintain power for another term, Bill Clinton needs some success in his foreign policy. Afghanistan is one of those places where, whenever the Clinton Administration can end the civil war, it will gain an important propaganda winning card. America's treatment of the Bosnian issue and the Dayton peace accord somewhat improved the position of the Democrats in American public opinion. Therefore, the Clinton Administration expects a similar situation regarding the Afghan issue. Although the Afghan issue is too complex for such a political solution, an agreement acceptable to all the groups could be found in the short time left before the U.S. presidential election. Nevertheless, the U.S. Government hopes that by inviting the heads of the Afghan

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groups to Washington it will persuade them to accept America's new plan.

Mohammad Zahir Shah, and the liberal group in the west supporting him, seem to be America's new choice. If America, with the support of Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, is able to turn the Taleban into his [Zahir Shah's] military arm, America's plan could become more viable, although it is difficult to imagine that it could completely end the power struggle. Clearly, if an agreement is reached about future power in Afghanistan, in the proposed Washington session, Bill Clinton will reach his propaganda objective. And if war continues in Afghanistan in different forms it will not be all that important. Considering those facts it seems that the Afghan groups should be more alert and not fall into Washington's trap. Otherwise they will lose the remainder of their credibility — most of which has been lost in the power struggle — and, after suffering so much hardship, pain, killing, destruction, and ruin and experiencing national, socialist, and Islamic republics, the people of Afghanistan will be forced to accept a monarchy again.

Iran: Journalist—Foreigners 'Undermine' Afghan Peace Pact

LD2506191496 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 20 Jun 96 p 15

[Article by Abuzehr Pirzadeh, an Afghan journalist in the Islamic Republic of Iran: "The Pact of Hope"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At the beginning of the current month, news agencies reported that a peace deal was signed between Golboddin Hekmatyar, leader of Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] of Afghanistan and Borhanoddin Rabbani, the president of the Islamic State of Afghanistan, a peace deal on the basis of which a nationwide peace was established between the two main warring factions in the Afghan crisis.

On the basis of the agreement, the two sides agreed to make comprehensive efforts to establish a nationwide peace among all the parties involved, to form an interim Islamic government representing all, or the majority of the factions, to resolve differences and hostility among various groups through talks and negotiations, to form a national army and to pave the way for holding elections to choose an elected government.

All the articles contained in the pact conform with the wishes and aspirations of the martyrs and the Muslim nation of Afghanistan and is in the interest of Islam and will not pose any harm to any jehadi group. It is for this reason that the Muslim and oppressed Afghan nation has welcomed the pact and the Afghan observers and experts named it "the pact of hope" [payman-e omid]. [passage omitted]

Despite the fact that "the pact of hope" has become a source of optimism for Afghans, many covert and overt hands from inside and abroad are trying to undermine the pact and portray it as weak. They are trying to change the hope of the Afghan people to disappointment and hopelessness through futile efforts. Among these futile efforts, we can mention the recent unsuccessful invitation by the Taleban group, which asked four Afghan jehadi groups to attend a conference in Kandahar to form a coalition against Rabbani's government; an invitation extended by the United States to leaders of the Afghan groups and the deposed King Zahir Shah [to attend a Senate session in Washington], and poisoned propaganda by Western arrogance to divide the Islamic Revolution Coordination Council.

In view of these futile efforts, which are certainly not in the interest of the Muslim nation of Afghanistan, the mojahed nation of Afghanistan expects the Islamic Republic of Iran to tirelessly endeavor to foil these efforts and factionally-motivated moves, and to work towards strengthening "the pact of hope" and to contribute to the process of encouraging other members of the Coordination Council and Afghan groups to join the pact. [passage ommited]

The long-suffering people of Afghanistan want the other leaders of the Afghan groups, especially the three leader members of the Coordination Council, to join the pact because of their goodwill and to prove once again to the Afghan nation their devotion, commitment and good intention by sacrificing their factional interest for the sake of the interest of Islam and their people.

At this sensitive stage of our country's history the Muslim nation of Afghanistan expects the Taleban group to refrain from stubbornness, bloodshed, and fratricide and not to sacrifice the high interest of the country and Islam for their own factional interest. Taleban should resolve their differences with the founders of "the pact of hope" and the future interim government through negotiations and by reaching an understanding with them.

We hope that the Muslim Afghan nation will be able to feel the valuable results of the pact and will be free from suffering, war, bloodshed and fratricide in the very near future. We hope they will be able to witness the ensuring of a lasting peace and security and the establishment of an Islamic government acceptable to all strata of the nation and the beginning of the reconstruction process in the long-suffering country, God willing.

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Iran: Va'ezi on Iran's Dialogue With Europeans

LD2406105396 Tehran IRNA in English
0816 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 24, IRNA — Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American affairs Mahmud Va'ezi said here Sunday [23 June] night that the U.S. left no stone unturned to prevent cooperation between Iran and the European Union (EU). The U.S., as a big rival of Europe that has lost its influence in the region, especially in Iran, tries to stop Europe from being a reliable and major partner for the Islamic republic, he noted.

Va'ezi who visited Italy last week to meet EU representatives, stressed that the EU and its members are, collectively or individually, opposed the U.S. moves from the very beginning. [as received]

The sixth round of Iran-EU negotiations started in Rome, Italy on June 20, as Italy was the rotating president of the EU.

Representatives from the troika, which comprises Spain, Ireland and Italy, as well as representatives of the European Council and the European Commission were present at the meeting.

Va'ezi further emphasized that if one country in the international community allows itself to determine the fate of others, the international set up and its regulations would be rendered meaningless. Furthermore, this deals a great blow to international relations and even to international peace and security. Therefore, the EU officially and in advance has let the U.S. authorities know of its opposition, he said.

Asked if the dialog with the European Union only focused on Iran, he stipulated that Tehran raised many issues, including the rights of Muslim minorities in Europe and the growing racial sentiments in some European countries. Va'ezi said that Iran-EU talks last week in Rome were held in a cordial atmosphere and the statement issued by the Italian foreign ministry at the end of the negotiations underscored this fact.

At the meeting, the Iranian delegation stressed the need for palpable results to be obtained from the talks and expressed readiness to cooperate with the EU while preserving its own principles. The two sides arrived at common points and achieved concrete results, he said, adding they agreed to continue the talks. He noted that last Thursday, [20 June] the European Commission denounced the move of the U.S. Congress against Iran.

At the Florence meeting, the EU heads also criticized the U.S. decision to enforce punitive measures against foreign companies that have commercial and economic dealings with the Islamic republic.

So far, Europe had proven eager to adopt an independent policy and approach, exclusive to itself, he said, adding that as long as this policy is enforced by the EU and the European countries do not abide by the imposed U.S. strategies, Iran can count on lasting economic and commercial relations.

"In our talks with the Europeans, we have always stressed this point and they have also said that Europe pursues its independent policy," the deputy foreign minister remarked.

Iran and the EU commenced their talks three years ago following the agreement of Iranian President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani and the exchange of letters with EU heads of state. The EU is pursuing a policy of dialog with Tehran and this policy has been re-emphasized time and again, he stated, adding that Iran welcomes this move as dialogs enable direct and explicit exchanges that allow both sides to become familiar with each other's views.

Iran believes that exchanging viewpoints with Europe on political, economic and cultural issues can bring about a sound understanding of Iran's outlooks and draw further attention to the realities in this country, provided the talks are held on the basis of mutual respect and the preservation of bilateral interests.

During the talks, Iran's clear and explicit views on issues of mutual interest were set forth, Va'ezi said expressing hope that the talks would provide grounds for bolstering of mutual cooperation. Ambassadors of both sides are to follow up the issues discussed at the meeting, he added.

Turning to the stance of the Florence session on Middle East peace process, Va'ezi stated that the reason the Iranian delegation recounted the failure of the said peace process is because of the weaknesses in the structure of the plan and has nothing to do with the support or lack of support of other countries. The plan has flaws in essence and in spotting and removing them and therefore, one should not look for outside elements. The plan needs to be reviewed from various aspects, he added.

The Iranian delegation also criticized Europe's treatment of groups which have carried out terrorist acts in Iran. He added European countries overlook terrorist nature of such groups and even provide them with facilities. This, Va'ezi said, is totally unacceptable and unjustified.

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Iran: Rostami on Air Force Maneuver, Turkey-Israel Accord

LD2506113696 Tehran IRNA in English 1103 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 25, IRNA — The Iranian Air Force is to conduct a large scale maneuver this year, the Air Force Deputy Commander Brigadier General Shahram Rostami was quoted as saying. In an interview with the morning daily 'IRAN' he stressed that the Air Force facilities and equipment will be used in the maneuver. The objective of the exercises is to evaluate the combat readiness of various airborne units and to display the combat power of the air force, he said.

On performance of the Air Force, General Rostami noted that the Air Force experts have succeeded in [repairing] military equipment damaged during the eight-year Iraqi imposed war. He further reiterated that by enjoying modern equipment and committed personnel, the Air Force is in a good shape and is ready to confront any possible aggression.

Referring to self-sufficiency of the Air Force with regards to pilot training, he voiced the force's readiness to train pilots from other countries particularly from the Islamic states. General Rostami also announced that a great part of military equipment used by the Air Force are manufactured inside the country.

In response to a question if the military accord signed by the Turkish government and the Zionist regime would pose a danger to Iran he replied: "Turkey is an Islamic state and Muslims have a specific attitude towards the Zionist regime. I don't think Turkey will pose a danger to Iran. However, we are watching our enemies' moves and are ready to take retaliatory measures if necessary," he said.

Iran: Paper Reports Speeches by Majles Deputies

LD2506220896 Tehran ETTELA'AT in Persian 19 Jun 96 p 10

[Report: "Deputy for Quchan and Deputy for Jiroft Speak as Pre-Agenda Speakers of the Majles Session"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At yesterday's open session of the Majles, the deputies for Kermanshah, Ardal va Farsan, Quchan, and Jiroft were the pre-agenda speakers. In their speeches, they referred to issues concerning their constituencies and also spoke about the country's current problems. The details of the pre-agenda speeches are as follows: [passage omitted]

The third pre-agenda speaker at yesterday's session was the deputy for Quchan, Mohammad Baqer Zakeri. [passage omitted]

Zakeri: I thank the praiseworthy inhabitants of the Quchan township for their continued confidence in me and I hope that, by assisting all organs and bodies at the level of the township, province, and country, I would be serving everyone and Islam as well as I can. In this respect, I should like the Industries Ministry to explain why the bicycle-manufacturing factory of Quchan, which was supposed to have become operational in 1364 [1985], has not yet been commissioned.

Also, while thanking the respected Energy Ministry for preparing the preliminary work of setting up the Tabarakabad dam, we hope that the esteemed president will perform the foundation ceremony of the dam.

I should also like to ask the Ministry of Health, Treatment, and Medical Training to equip and open Quchan's 92-bed hospital as soon as possible, and to explain why building work on the 64-bed hospital for the deprived district of Bajgiran has been halted. He added: Regretfully, the current standards of education and training in Quchan are at their lowest since the Islamic revolution.

He then said: During Construction Jihad Week when every struggling combatant [jihadi] should be given encouragement, we were informed that the interior minister has summarily dismissed the combatant governor-general of the vast Khorasan Province. Since this way of treating experienced and successful administrators is not in the interest of the country, I and a number of Khorasan's deputies feel obliged to ask the respected interior minister why he has taken this step. Evidently, if the minister's reply is not convincing, we will follow up the case within the framework of the law and shall act on the basis of our religious and legal duties.

'Ali Zadsar, deputy for Jiroft, was the last pre-agenda speaker of yesterday's session. [passage omitted]

In a part of his speech, Zadsar said: Just as we are about to begin Judiciary Week, a number of British members of European parliament are visiting the Islamic Republic of Iran. With due respect, these gentlemen should not forget that this country is the center of the world of Islam. People in the Islamic Republic of Iran take pride in pure Muhammadan Islam and they are proud of observing the Islamic dress code. They consider that wine-drinking and adultery are shameful activities and believe that it is in the interest of society to send drug dealers to their death.

We remind them that they should look at the realities of Islamic society with the necessary insight and convey what they see to world public opinion. They should know that the Majles's message is: The best, purest,

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and most popular [mardomi] government in the world today is the Islamic Republic of Iran.

He then said: We advise the rulers of Bahrain not to accuse the Islamic Republic of Iran of meddling in their country's affairs. Many governments have tried to feed their nations with sweets and candies, but to no effect. Learn from these lessons, don't disgrace yourselves and don't trouble us; respond to the demands of your people and be popular.

We would also like to point out to Turkey and its sinister ally — the tyrannical, Jerusalem-occupying regime — not to test those who have experience and have already been tested, because the regret that this would bring inevitably bring would be counter-productive. [passage omitted]

He then said: Esteemed Majles; respected colleagues! It is incumbent on us to carry out the instructions and advice of the imams, that is, we should appreciate and value the lofty hezbollah and should ourselves be hezbollahis. We should identify the misleading, Western liberalism, which has penetrated our society and the Islamic government and we should stand against its illegitimate expectations. [passage omitted]

Iran: Majles Considers Bill To Guarantee Exports

LD2606094496 Tehran IRNA in English 0929 GMT 26 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 26, IRNA — To eliminate obstacles on the way of non-oil commodities exports and to safeguard rights of exporters and producers against financial damages, a bill was presented to the Majles spelling out procedures of management of the fund to guarantee Iran's exports.

Announcing the decision, the managing director of the fund, Ahmad Shafi'e Hanjani, said on Tuesday [25 June] that once the bill is ratified, the fund will be able to expand its scope of activities and fulfill its obligations on time.

The approval of the bill will also provide grounds for expanding non-oil commodities exports, he added, further stating that there were provisions in the previous law that did not correspond with the present day issues.

Shafi'e stressed the fund must enjoy a strong backing from the government in order to attract exporters.

In case the bill is approved, one percent of the C.I.F. value of non-governmental export commodities will be obtained from importers to promote exports.

To accelerate the export process, surety (guarantee) bonds of the fund will replace the banking security bonds for exporters, he added.

Stating that the fund's capital is rls. 100,000 million, Shafi'e said rls. 70,000 million worth of surety bonds were issued for export commodities during the past Iranian year (ended March 19), and in three cases rls. 200 million were paid as compensation for damages.

He disclosed that Iran intends to extend a credit of dlrs. 200 million to Central Asian countries and the fund will guarantee its repayment.

With regards to construction of silos, export of 50 buses and implementation of a fiber optic project in Turkmenistan by Iran, the fund has become duty-bound to guarantee a dlr. 45-million credit.

He concluded by saying that the fund will guarantee repayment of all credits granted by Iran to other countries.

Iran: Daily Attacks Damavand Majles Deputy for Liberal Remarks

LD2506213296 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 20 Jun 96 p2

[Article by Mas'ud Safiri entitled: "Mr Deputy! Do You Know What You Are Talking About?"]

[FBIS Translated Text] In an interview with the English-language daily 'IRAN NEWS' yesterday [19 June], the Majles deputy from Damavand and Firuzkuh spoke about the concept of liberalism and said: The term actually means the Servants of Construction, or the so-called G-6.

The deputy, Ahmad Rasulinezhad, added: The liberals were seeking a compromise with the global arrogance. Therefore, we had to stop them from getting into the Majles.

He continued his remarks by suggesting that ministers close to this G-6 group should resign, otherwise they may face interpellation in the Majles.

There are a number of points in these remarks which should not have been put forward in such an explicit and angry manner, given the general interests of the system and also considering recent remarks by the esteemed leader.

First: The fourth Majles had given the incumbent government ministers its vote of confidence. Rasulinezhad was a deputy in the fourth Majles. How come he never said anything about his concerns before?

In addition, one must remember that all deputies who are elected to the Majles have already received the Guardian Council's approval.

Second: There is no possibility of compromise with the arrogance as long as the executive and legislative

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powers are led by individuals who are approved and sanctioned by the esteemed leader, and a Vali-e Faqih stands at the apex of the whole Islamic Republic political system. Ideas such as this therefore have no place in Islamic Iran.

Third: The lever of interpellation. What is the meaning of a deputy recommending resignation to a number of ministers? Is interpellation a right that the public grants to Majles deputies so that they can defend the nation's rights and interests, or is it an instrument to be used by one group to impose its will on others?

Did the esteemed deputy from Damavand and Firuzkuh not hear the remarks by the esteemed leader in his meeting with the Majles deputies? Did he not hear what the leader said about the presence of political groups in the country?

Fourth: Is it not a fact that preventing the entry of the liberals — or the Servants of Construction, as Mr. Rasulinezhad puts it — into the fifth Majles in fact undermines the credibility of one of the most magnificent elections ever held in the entire history of the Islamic Republic?

What consequences can remarks such as these have for the Islamic revolution and political system, which are at present experiencing some of their most sensitive and trying times?

In a bid to prove the legitimacy of his particular faction's viewpoints, the Damavand and Firuzkuh deputy has chosen to adopt a negative method. Perhaps he is entitled to do so. However, what is certain is that he has no right whatsoever to enter the crucial area of undermining the political system's key interests.

There is no group or faction whose interests can be more important than the lofty interests of the nation and the political system as a whole.

Iran: Oppressed Foundation Head Speaks on Policies

LD2506144496 Tehran HAMSHAHRI in Persian 20 Jun 96 p 8

[Interview with Mohsen Rafiqdust, head of the Foundation for the Oppressed: "Government Economic Policies, Development, and Poverty Eradication"]

[FBIS Translated Text] [HAMSHAHRI] The Foundation for the Oppressed is a powerful organization in Iran's economy. For that reason, it is affected by policies adopted by the government in various areas. How do you assess the government's economic policies in the new year and those policies adopted in the past which are still being implemented, particularly policies adopted last year? Have those policies impeded or aided the foundation in its operations?

[Rafiqdust] There is no argument about the basis of the policies of the government of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, which is construction and solving economic problems. Most of the policies adopted by the government so far have been based on consultation with experts, and the decisions made in accordance with those policies have been beneficial to the public.

It should be pointed out that certain policies are not sufficiently lasting, and for that reason have prevented medium-term planning. However, the policies adopted this year have so far been constructive for the manufacturing sector. We hope that their implementation continues.

[HAMSHAHRI] Which particular new policy of the government is beneficial to the manufacturing sector?

[Rafiqdust] It seems that the policy to free prices and reduce government control on manufacturers is the most fundamental policy adopted in the new year which will result in an increase in production and bring order to it.

Basically, the principle should be accepted that to solve the country's economic problems depends on paying serious attention to the manufacturing sector. So long as production is not increased and supply does not overtake demand, it is not possible to solve the problems of inflation and high prices, even through strict control.

If the government encounters a problem, it should not change its policies and solve the problem elsewhere. It is better for us to let manufacturers carry out their programs.

[HAMSHAHRI] Since the beginning of the year, the industries minister, the director general of the Plan and Budget organization, and the governor of the Central Bank of Iran have been saying that the needs of the manufacturers for foreign currency will be met. Will you back those promises with action?

[Rafiqdust] Fortunately, since the beginning of this year, the foreign exchange section of the Central Bank has been active and has done good work. However, we should wait and see what happens in the future. I hope very much that the authorities fulfill their promises.

We should also note that under the present conditions, some industrial manufacturers are facing cash flow problems. They should be protected by the government and the banks should give them the necessary credit.

[HAMSHAHRI] In your opinion, should all industrial manufacturers be given foreign currency and rial credit?

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[Rafiqdust] No. It should be prioritized. First, those factories which are relatively important and whose foreign currency expenditure is less than others should be given foreign currency and rial credit. It is important to expedite the granting of the credit.

[HAMSHAHRI] In you opinion, do the country's commercial policies help toward the goal of increasing production?

[Rafiqdust] You see, it is clear to everybody that one can no longer run the country by relying on the foreign currency earned from oil exports. A portion of the country's foreign currency revenues should come from non-oil exports. Also the ratio of foreign exchange revenues from non-oil exports to total foreign exchange revenues should be increased. To reach that goal requires higher production. We, therefore, need to rid our export policies of the assortment of restrictions. Otherwise, the goal of higher production would be unattainable. The commercial and industrial manufacturing policies should be more coordinated. If, for example, sugar is to be imported, is it not better to import raw sugar, give it to the factories to process?

[HAMSHAHRI] Are the government's commercial and industrial policies currently coordinated?

[Rafiqdust] Discussions on the subject continue and fortunately positive steps have been taken in that respect.

[HAMSHAHRI] As you are aware, the subject of poverty eradication has become a major issue these days. There has been a great deal of talk about the various topics mentioned. I want to ask your opinion about it and also what, in your opinion, are ways of eradicating poverty?

[Rafiqdust] I don't know much about the argument that development has nothing to do with the eradication of poverty. If the process of development is correct, it will be an important factor in eradicating poverty. If we regard the first [five-year economic development] plan and assess it properly, we would see that the plan entailed the eradication of poverty in general and that it was successful on that score. Supplying electricity and water, building roads and providing hygiene in villages are the most prominent examples of eradication of poverty which have been carried out properly. Building dams, erecting power plants, increasing wheat production and reducing its imports, in spite of a population increase, and so forth can be regarded as other factors in the eradication of poverty about which we have had major success in the first plan.

A point which should be made here is the payment of subsidies and its relation to the eradication of poverty. It seems that subsidizing basic goods and also subsidizing electricity, gasoline, and other commodities, in its current form, has resulted in the rich also benefiting and for all the subsidy paid by the government not to go to the poor. On the other hand if the development process, in the manner I mentioned, is halted and all government revenues are placed at the disposal of the public in the form of subsidies, undoubtedly we would not be able to continue it for more than a few years. A development plan which attaches importance to building the economic infrastructure will ultimately lead to the eradication of poverty.

[HAMSHAHRI] Investment is an important factor in economic growth and development. In your view, has the trend of investment in the country been such that we can consider it as positive and on course for an increase in production?

[Rafiqdust] If we scrutinize the country's economy and the issue of investment in various sectors, we would see that the problems in the country's commercial and manufacturing sectors are not the same and that, in practice, the commercial sector faces fewer problems. For that reason, investors are less willing to invest in the manufacturing sector than in the commercial sector. The necessary steps, such as making some industrial activities exempt from paying tax and other duties and the provision of other legal facilities at their disposal, so that investments come to the manufacturing sector, is an unavoidable necessity today.

We should note that the commercial sector cannot guarantee the survival of the country and the economy. It is the manufacturing sector that is important.

[HAMSHAHRI] What is your view on foreign investment? Has the Oppressed Foundation so far been successful in attracting foreign investments?

[Rafiqdust] Foreign investment usually brings with it advanced technology and if it does, it is beneficial to our country. Otherwise, foreign investment may damage the country's economy and we should, therefore, make do without it.

Considering that point, since at present we have an abundance of capital which we should spend on manufacturing activities, the Foundation has so far not attracted any foreign investments.

[HAMSHAHRI] How do you assess the security of investments in the country?

[Rafiqdust] That sometimes things are said about lack of security of investments in the country is not right in my view. A look at the remarks and actions of our country's president and ministers in recent years shows

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that investors are protected, and that if there are any problems anywhere, it is not the wish of the country's top officials. In any case, life is not all that easy and has its ups and downs. We should move toward completely solving the problems in that area.

[HAMSHAHRI] What is the Foundation's estimated level of investments for this year and what projects will be implemented this year?

[Rafiqdust] This year the Oppressed Foundation will invest 37 billion tumans in various sectors. The foundation's three big projects, the large Qataran refinery in Esfahan with a capital outlay of $40 million and 8 billion tumans, the large cement factory in Ilam with a capital outlay of $75 million and 8 billion tumans, and the Alyaf spinning factory in Malayer with a capital outlay of $10 million and 4 billion tumans, in addition to five food factories and dozens of small plants, will be commissioned this year.

Production by the Foundation's agricultural section rose by 100 percent in 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995] compared to 1371 [year beginning 21 March 1992]. The production of sugar rose by seven percent, rubber by four percent, neopan by 35 percent, stationary by 79 percent, and beverages by 44 percent.

The Foundation carried out contract work to the value of 1 billion tumans in 1368 [year beginning 21 March 1989]; that figure has now increased by 1,000 percent, to 100 billion tumans. In 1368, the Foundation's construction section was capable of building 24,000 square meters; that figure has now risen to 2.8 million square meters. The construction of the most difficult sections of the Sarakhs-Mashhad railway by companies affiliated to the Foundation is a sign of Iran's capabilities. Because of the Foundation's capabilities in that respect, the construction of the strategic Tehran-North highway has been assigned to the Foundation.

Iran: Minister Reviews Fight Against Drug Traffickers

LD2506204796 Tehran IRNA in English 1958 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 25, IRNA — Minister of the Interior 'Ali Mohammad Besharati said here on Tuesday [25 June] that as confirmed by the United Nations Iran tops the list of countries fighting drug traffickers.

In a press interview here today with Iranian and foreign reporters on the occasion of international week of campaign against narcotics, Besharati said that last calendar year (ended March 20), 170,263 kg of narcotics including 12,573 kg of morphine, 135,460 kg of opium, 19,736 kg of hashish, 1,900 kg of heroin and 503 kg of various other drugs were seized from traffickers throughout the country.

He added that 46,415 drug traffickers and over 59,000 addicts were rounded up during the period, of whom 679 smugglers were foreign citizens.

Besharati said the Americans were active in the production and distribution of narcotics in Latin America.

He said the Islamic Republic of Iran has already inked memorandums of understanding with most of the world countries such as Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Greece, Germany, Austria and Sweden for exchange of experiences in order to end the sinister phenomenon of the narcotic smuggling.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to ink same accords with the Persian Gulf Arab states and other neighboring countries in this regard, added Besharati.

Answering a question posed by a Japanese TV correspondent regarding the production and distribution of narcotics in the regions of Afghanistan controlled by the Taleban militia, he said that unfortunately, the Taleban are supporting drug smugglers.

Iran: Court Official—24,500 Cases of Drug Smuggling Examined

LD2506122296 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 0930 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Translated Text] The head of Tehran's Islamic revolution court of campaign against drugs announced that more than 24,500 cases related to drug dealing were investigated and completed during the past year [ending 19 March 1996].

In an interview with our correspondent, Mr. Hoseyni said that 31,226 offenders were sentenced to imprisonment or were fined on charges of smuggling drugs or addiction to drugs during 1374 [year beginning 21 March 1995]; a number of them were sent to rehabilitation centers.

Mr. Hoseyni said that more than 5.9 billion rials were collected as fines from offenders and another 6 million rials were placed into the government treasury account through the confiscation and sale of convicted persons' properties by the relevant commission.

The head of the Islamic revolution court added: Three big networks of merchants of death [drug traffickers] which were engaged at international level in smuggling drugs in Tehran and the provinces, were identified and 50 people were arrested in this connection.

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Mr. Hoseyni said: During the past year 12 tonnes of various kinds of drugs in Greater Tehran and 130 tonnes in the provinces were handed over to the Islamic revolution court of campaign against drugs by the law enforcement agencies.

Iran: Official Expects Increase in Iranian Oil Reserves

LD2406165796 Tehran IRAN NEWS in English 20 Jun 96 p 12

[Report by Mahyar Emami in "Economic Review" column: "Iran Announces Big Oil Reserves Boost in Future"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] A top National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC) official said in an interview with IRAN NEWS recently that by adopting new exploratory techniques another 20 billion barrels of oil may be added to Iranian reserves. This will place Iran's proven reserves at over 110 billion barrels, putting Iran second only to Saudi Arabia.

The above announcement of massive new reserves additions in Iran was made by NIOC Exploration Director Seyyed Mehdi Hoseyni. Mr. Hoseyni was former NIOC's director of Foreign Ventures and International Contracts. Following the triumph of the Islamic revolution, he was delegated to enter into negotiations on the oil-related cases taken to the Hague International Court of Justice as well as other international courts on behalf of the Iranian minister of petroleum.

The above announcement forces the following conclusions: Islamic Republic of Iran has one of the largest petroleum reserves in the world. Iran is an attractive oil investment area. Persian Gulf OPEC member countries are steadily adding to their reserves. And OPEC member states, for a long time to come, will dominate the world crude oil supply. Today, OPEC member countries hold about 77 percent of total world proven recoverable oil reserves of some one trillion barrels. OPEC's reserve-to-production ratio is about 84 years, against non-OPEC's ratio of only 18 years.

Since early 1980s, besides the violation of quotas by some OPEC members, the coming on stream of substantial volumes of non-OPEC producers from United States (Alaska), the North Sea, Mexico, Egypt has influenced the oil price level.

World oil prices were almost constant from 1950 to 1972. They then took a jump in 1973 and again in 1979, after which they began to decrease. The oil price was collapsed in 1986 and since then the price has never recovered to a healthy level, except for short intervals.

However, most oil analysts expect that declining output from non-OPEC producers during the next few years will ease the world oil glut.

In 1995, crude oil production in the United States, the world's second largest non-OPEC producer after the former Soviet Union, fell to about 6.5 million barrels per d[redacted]nal of 30 October 199[redacted]as at its lowest level since 1954.

The North Sea oil production is also expected to decline rapidly after 1998. Oil experts in industry believe that in consequence of rising world oil demand, on the one hand, and declining production in non-OPEC areas, on the other, the call on OPEC supplies is bound to increase.

"Looking beyond to 2005, we are talking about 37 million barrels per day OPEC production being needed, which is almost 12 million barrels per day above today's production", according to a chief economist quoted by the recent issue of the Oil and Gas Journal.

In order to meet future world oil demand, OPEC must undertake the expansion in its production capacity.

However, in recent years due to the current price of oil, most projects for production expansion have been stopped.

During the past decades, the world has learnt a lesson that the very high or very low oil prices are definitely to nobody's benefit. As a result, government leaders and top oil industry officials have been urging the opening of dialogues and cooperation between OPEC and non-OPEC producers, consumers and oil companies to find some acceptable prices for oil in order to encourage oil companies to invest in the expansion operations in places where the bulk of the world's oil reserves are located.

Iran: Rafsanjani Urges Research on Islamic Ideas on Management

LD2506154396 Tehran IRNA in English 1444 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, June 25, IRNA — President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani here on Tuesday [25 June] emphasized the importance of conducting research on the views of Islam on management.

in a message to a seminar on management and leadership read by Vice-President Mirmohammadi, the president recommended that research on Islamic views on management should be given due attention by the scientific and cultural centers.

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President Rafsanjani called on scholars at theological centers and universities and those in charge of executive management of the state to make use of the 17-year experience of the revolution concerning management in order to introduce the ability of Islam to administer the country.

The president recommended Iranian managers to promote their morality and ethics as two characteristics distinguishing them from managers in eastern and western countries.

Ignoring morality and ethics in management would cause irreparable loss to the Islamic management, the president warned.

Hojjat ol-Eslam Rafsanjani said in the meantime that management in Islam as termed by the holy Koran as a divine phenomenon should be analyzed and studied by researchers.

Iran: Islamization of Universities Discussed

NC2606071696 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 16 Jun 96 p 2

[Commentary by Mohammad Reza Borujerdi on an interview by the deputy minister of higher education for cultural and Majles affairs]

[FBIS Translated Text] On 29 Ordibehesht [18 May] this year, the great leader of the revolution, His Eminence the Grand Ayatollah Khamene'i, who is the most expert and sympathizing individual when it comes to the country's cultural affairs in general and to university affairs in particular, made some statements during a meeting with university officials that have truly made all the academicians and cultural personalities in the country think and which created impetus in the hearts of the forces which believe in the universities. With the publication of the news of these remarks and with more details becoming known to the public, the immenseness of the problem is being felt more and more. During this meeting, the leader stated:

Whatever we are saying has been said many times over. What we need is action and only action.

What is clear as far as what should be done and the favorable direction toward which we should move is that the esteemed leader has repeatedly pointed out the path and direction which should be taken. And what should have been done and should be done is to act according to these directives. Inevitably the main institution which is in charge of implementing this significant duty is, first and foremost, the ministry of culture and higher education; and the esteemed leader too considers this major responsibility to rest on the shoulders of this part of the system.

From the point of view of the esteemed leader, there is no vague point and everything is crystal clear in his mind.

The situation in our universities today is undoubtedly far better than it was in the first years of the revolution, but the leader of the revolution has reservations when he says:

Nevertheless, what should have been done has not been done. No university has been Islamicized and the university that is not Islamic should be made Islamic.

How and in what direction the universities should move is a point which the esteemed leader clarifies when he says:

The universities are not Islamic and must become Islamic. And this cannot be done unless you carry out a fundamental, caring, long-term, well-planned, and comprehensive change...

In a simple summing up of the esteemed leader's directives, we can say that, first of all, the universities are not Islamic and that, secondly, action is needed at this juncture. But let us see what the officials of the ministry of culture and higher education have said and are saying, at a time when the esteemed leader has made these comments.

The esteemed minister has exerted added efforts, and spoken at certain educational institutions on various occasions, about the issue of some university professors and academicians... However, unfortunately some of the executive arms of the ministry have made certain comments that have caused concern among pious university academicians and have cast the doubt that this time also what these gentlemen [at the ministry] have in mind is "talk and only talk."

This concern starts, first and foremost, from the alteration behind the meaning of the words used by the esteemed leader. In relation to this, first of all the deputy minister of cultural and higher education for administrative and financial affairs spoke in an interview about the further "Islamization" of universities. This means that in his view, the university is already "Islamic" and should only be further "Islamicized". However, this contradicts what the esteemed leader said when he stated that the universities are not Islamic. But what motivated me into writing this commentary was the remarks last week of another deputy minister — Dr. Shoja'ifard, deputy minister of culture and higher education for cultural and Majles affairs and a member of that group of people who believe in the further Islamization of universities. In his interview on [22 Khordad] 11 June, Dr. Shoja'ifard first made a 180-degree turn on the topic and very surprisingly stated:

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"The Islamization of the universities in the country does not mean the dismissal or purging of academicians."

Undoubtedly the adoption of such a stand by one of the high-ranking officials of the ministry is — to a certain extent — unrealistic and disappointing. The point here is that there is no doubt that one of the major obstacles to the Islamization of universities is the infiltration of problematic academicians who oppose the revolution in the universities and that undoubtedly fundamental decisions and precise planning should be made in order to identify and to remove mischievous individuals. And this is precisely what is referred to as "interpretation" [ejtehad] vis-a-vis "text" [nass]. The question is: What are the lines in the text of the esteemed leader's directives? Undoubtedly from the point of view of the esteemed leader, safeguarding the respect and strengthening the Muslim and caring academicians in the universities is among the major objectives of the system. But what should be done about the academicians who oppose Islamic values and the revolution? In relation to this, the esteemed leader clearly stated during his recent meeting:

"Do not fear them. We have many pious people. As soon as you see someone displaying overt disbelief in the basis and in the sanctities of the revolution, dismiss him... There may be those who sometimes use a good name to fight. But naturally this fight will have two sides. When he fights, he will be fought against and we will not idly sit back... Therefore, if you feel that this applies to someone, dismiss him... Let a pious person, a person who believes, a person who believes what you believe come to the classes and teach. Why should we place our youths in the hands of people who do not accept us? Thank God, there is no need for such people today...

At a time when the esteemed leader speaks so decisively about removing the obstacles to the Islamization of universities, it is not clear why one of the deputy ministers and someone who believes in the further Islamization of the universities opens an "umbrella of protection" over such people. If they claim that they were only referring to the Muslim academicians, then there is no need for them to go into such explanations and comments because the leader's warnings are aimed only at that portion of the academicians who question the basis of the system. And if we claim that there are no such people in the universities, this shows clear ignorance about the atmosphere in the universities, because not one day passes without a report of insults by these people to the sanctities of the system reaching the ears of officials. And when you say that "the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran attaches special value and respect to academicians of the university and the protection extended by the higher education system to these people has been reflected in the laws pertaining to the welfare and other issues of the academicians..." then the protection extended by the system to the academicians is problematic and you should give a decisive answer to the public opinion of the Muslim academicians on the blatant contradiction with the leader's directives and on the unfairness that is being exercised toward the Islamic forces in the universities.

The question is: Whose favors do you want to gain? Instead of working toward the "practical" implementation of the leader's directives, are you not seeking to gain the favors of the liberals and pro-Western elements in the universities — which you yourself know have multiplied more than ever before?

The question is: Does the safe atmosphere and laws and regulations that you claim "cover the members of the academic staff" apply only to these people? If not, what have you done and what will you do to confront these elements and to rid the universities of them? Why do you not allow any doubts to cross your mind when it comes to ridding or limiting healthy, pious, and Muslim elements from the universities with no interpretation of the law, but when it comes to confronting the other elements you rise up to talk about "interpretation vis-a-vis text" in the remarks of the esteemed leader?

The esteemed temporary Friday Imam of Tehran referred to this important issue in his Friday [14 June] sermon this week and stressed:

"As long as there are incompetent people among the management or academic staff of the universities, there is no room for a discussion on the Islamization of the universities. The first step should be to appoint competent people to the management and academic positions."

In view of the above, the major question now is: Is there the necessary determination and will at the ministry of culture and higher education to correctly comprehend the esteemed leader's remarks and to work toward the elimination of the problematic academicians from the universities or not? Will this time, like other times, "buts" and "ifs" be heard and, academic laws and regulations!! created and committees and contrived groups formed; will the text of what the leader of the cause of the Muslims says burn in the fires of interpretation by some university scholars!!?

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Iran: Government To Sponsor University Political Organizations

LD2306133896 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 19 Jun 96 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Formation of Political Student Organizations at Azadi University"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Political student organizations will be formed in various sections of the Islamic Azad University in order to heighten the awareness and the analytical ability of students toward domestic and foreign affairs. This is taking place after repeated requests to engage in political activity were put to university officials by students at Tehran universities.

This news was announced by the Public Relations Office at the Institution Representing the Esteemed Leader, which added: "Following a speech by His Eminence Ayatollah Khamene'i on the need for university students to be politically aware, and his other repeated statements on the subject, this institution has placed on its agenda the responsibility for forming political organizations at the Islamic Azad University. One of the main responsibilities of university students is to participate in political, social, and cultural affairs. Toward this end the officials at the institution who are in charge of Islamic and political student organizations have prepared the ground and we are soon to witness the activities of these organizations."

Iran: RESALAT Calls For Truce With Moderates

LD2206171396 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 18 Jun 96 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "The Beginning of Cooperation"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Some people believe that elections are a manifestation of a social "misunderstanding" that must be forgotten as soon as elections are over and that the primary philosophy of elections, and their subsequent results, are to reach a reasonable "understanding" to manage the government.

The emergence of a "misunderstanding" to reach an "understanding" in the management of government is one of the extraordinary paradoxes of democratic government.

And it is for this reason that, in current democracies, individuals or factions, who have been defeated in the election process, congratulate the victorious individual or faction. The compliment is meant to indicate the end of the "misunderstanding" and the beginning of an "understanding" toward better management of the system and the country.

The very individuals and factions that until the elections were so divided and could not tolerate each other, now have to think about an understanding for managing the country, according to the power given to them by the people and in order to improve things.

Although a parliamentary deputy might be chosen from a particular area and by a certain number people, he represents all the nation and is "responsible to all the people and has the right to express an opinion on all domestic and foreign issues." (Footnote 1) (The Constitution).

Thus, elections are a peaceful means of solving intellectual conflicts in the service of managing a popular system and are apparently the only way that people believe they can utilize to solve their conflicts without resorting to violence.

The elections are the most important mechanism for the political participation of the people in the management of the Islamic Republic.

However, there is no doubt that in our system, the meaning of political participation is different from that of other systems. Indeed, the meaning and nature of democracy is totally different in our system from those of Western systems that claim to be democratic.

We think that democracy does not mean "government of the people for the people," or "government on the basis of consent," or "majority rule," or "equal rights in government," or "popular government." These meanings and definitions are of course acceptable and pleasant, but they are not what we understand of democracy.

A new meaning of popular sovereignty distinguishes our democracy from the typical democracies of the world. And that is an incredible understanding that until now the world has only experienced the rule of an individual over the community or the community over the community; that is the government of man over man. But our people are now saying that let us, for once, experience the sweet taste of the government of God over man. Indeed the message of the movement led by Imam Khomeyni, may he be admitted to God's paradise, was simply this: "Let us experience the government of God over man."

The fifth Majles is gradually beginning its serious mission for guarding the values of the revolution and the rights of the people.

In a recent message to the fifth Majles, the esteemed leader of the revolution stressed that the Majles must be the manifestation of unity and harmony for the nation, groups, ethnic groups, tastes, and interests.

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Now, in order to heal the wounds suffered during the election campaign, to put an end to the misunderstandings, and to reach a common understanding, it is necessary to have a common comprehension of notions in the fields of politics, economics, culture, and revolution.

The esteemed leader of the revolution has, in many of his speeches or guidelines, entered into the domain of these notions.

In his recent message to the fifth Majles, he clearly and accurately referred to the issues of universities, the national culture, the phenomenon of liberalism, etc.

Our system is at the height of its power today, because even though the various political tastes and interests might have differences of views over things, they have no doubt about the station of the Guardian of the Jurisconsult, his role in leading the country, and the need to obey his orders.

With this huge power, it is possible to sound the sweet music of national cooperation and coordination and to look toward a bright and victorious future.

More than 220 members of the Majles have sent a letter to the esteemed leader of the Islamic Revolution to announce that the theme of the fifth Majles will be to stand against western liberalism, to solve people's problems, and to guard national unity during the next four years.

The clear statement of their position in that letter was a positive step toward cooperation. The letter was indeed the beginning of cooperation and coordination toward solving people's problems; respecting the interests of the system; building a proud and powerful Islamic Iran; serving the revolution; and declaring devotion to the dear leader of the revolution.

Iran: Daily Notes Unemployment Rate Higher Among Women

LD2406194296 Tehran AKHBAR in Persian 20 Jun 96 p5

[Unattributed news report entitled: "Women Unemployed More Numerous Than Men - Iranian Statistical Center"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The results of a general census on employment, which began in the year 1373 [1994-95], show that more than 49 million of the country's population is over 6 years old. Among this age group, 27.8 percent are working and 3.02 percent are unemployed and seeking work. [figures as published]

According to a report of the Iranian Statistical Center Public Relations Office, among the said age group, 11.67 percent of the employed are women, whereas the women's share of the unemployment figure is 16.27 percent. [passage omitted]

Iran: Reader Suggests Closing All Iranian TV Transmitters

LD2406211696 Tehran SALAM in Persian 22 Jun 96 p3

[From the "Hello Salam" column: "Reader Criticizes Television Programs"]

[FBIS Translated Text] The television channels, instead of showing films and other interesting programs, transmit programs similar to the radio broadcasts nearly all day long. That is, every time one switches on one of the television channels, an announcer is shown talking to viewers. The talks are generally the same, repeating words of advice. The difference between our television programs and the radio broadcasts is that you can see the announcer's face on the television screen, as if the people are eager to see a face.

May I suggest that the IRIB officials should save money by broadcasting all the words of advice through a single radio transmitter. What is the point of opening four different television channels when they all broadcast the same programs? For God's sake, close the television stations and keep a single radio station. The money saved in this way can be used to promote sports.

Pakistan

Pakistan: Bhutto Discloses Plans To 'Create Trouble'

BK2506163796 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has disclosed that there is a plan to create trouble in the country during next six weeks and said all necessary measures are being taken to thwart designs of vested political interests. Talking to newsmen in Islamabad this evening, she made it clear that the entire opposition was not involved, rather a part of it with vested political motives is involved in this planning. The prime minister pointed out that this vested political interest wanted to use some institutions to further their nefarious designs. But she was confident that no institution would respond to any planning aimed at creating turmoil in the country at this critical juncture.

The prime minister regretted the loss of life in yesterday's unfortunate incident in Rawalpindi and spoke a word of praise for peaceful strike observed by PML [Pakistan Muslim League]-Nawaz group a day earlier. Giving details, the prime minister stated that the crowd

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gathered included 30 percent armed people. They included Afghan commandos and their like-minded Pakistani fellows who took part in the Afghan jehad together. She said some of them have confessed to have received commando training during the Afghan jehad. Despite all this, the prime minister emphasized, her government does not nurture any political vengeance toward its opponents, and that is why she had sent one of the ministers and her political secretary to enquire about the welfare of those who sustained injuries in yesterday's trouble and render financial assistance to them.

Replying to a question, Ms. Benazir Bhutto emphatically said there is political stability in the country, with federal and all the provincial governments working within the constitutional bounds. Similarly, law and order is under control, Karachi situation has improved and sectarianism in Punjab rectified. She declared that peaceful political activity is welcome, but no one will be allowed to indulge in violence. Our people, she said, are politically conscious and they would not fall prey to any political machination aimed at creating disorder in the country.

The prime minister expressed her pleasure over the adoption of all the demands for grant in respect of the next federal budget.

Pakistan: Sharif Seeks To Disqualify Bhutto, Zardari From House

BK2506140096 Islamabad THE NATION in English 25 Jun 96 pp 1, 5

[Report by Khalid Qayum]

[FBIS Transcribed Excerpt] ISLAMABAD — The Opposition on Monday submitted a reference to the National Assembly Speaker under Article 63(2) of the Constitution seeking disqualification of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari as members of the lower house. The petitioner asked the Speaker to forward the petition to the Chief Election Commission to ascertain whether the said National Assembly members stood disqualified for concealing the alleged purchase of property in Surrey, England.

The petition, prepared by advocate Khalid Anwar according to PML(N) spokesman, was handed over to the Speaker by opposition member Iftikhar Gillani during Monday's National Assembly session.

The disqualification petition is based on news report published in British newspaper Sunday Express earlier this month saying Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and her husband Asif Ali Zardari had bought a mansion in Surrey spread over 355 acres for 2.5 million pounds.

The petition maintained though the Prime Minister rebutted the news story, she refused to file a libel suit against the newspaper to vindicate her position. "The present petition relates to the continuing gross violation of constitutional provisons of fundamental importance by the respondents while holding high public office," the petition said. While the respondents we're calling for austerity and sacrifice, they were displaying riches by acquiring a "perfect hideaway" in Surrey. If the story was wrong the Prime Minister could have vindicated her honour and could have redeemed herself by filing libel suit against the newspaper. But her silence was tantamount to an "implied admission and acceptance of the truth of the SUNDAY EXPRESS news report".

The petition said that the newspaper had stated that it stood firmly behind its story challenging the respondents to commence legal proceedings. [passage omitted]

The petition said that the Constitution mandated that a member parliament must ensure that no act should be done or attributed to him that could have adverse moral impact on the public. The purchase of Surrey property and respondents' conduct to transaction was violative of the conditions and qualifications stated in Article 62 and 63 of the Constitution. "The respondents deny it but fail to take any step which would have adverse repercussions on public morality. It said that purchase of Surrey property had been subjected to public ridicule in Pakistan as well as abroad. When the Prime Minister is ridiculed, Pakistan's international standing must inevitably suffer as security and sovereignty of a nation depended on international perception of nation's leadership and legislator.

"The present scandal, must also be set in the context of allegations made recently that Pakistan has the reputation of being the second most corrupt country in the world."

The petition charged that the respondents' failure to pursue the matter in court was harmful to the sovereignty, integrity and security of Pakistan.

Pakistan: Delegate Warns UN on Indian CTBT Stance

BK2506133896 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has warned that India's refusal to sign a nuclear test ban treaty could sound the death knell of the proposed CTBT [Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty]. Speaking at the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva today, Pakistan's delegate Mr. Munir Akram said all the nuclear capable states must sign the treaty simultaneously, otherwise it would be a farce.

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Pakistan: Federal Cabinet Views Salient Features of Budget

BK2406175296 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 24 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The [federal] cabinet after discussing the post-budget situation noted with satisfaction the development allocations in the budget for 1996-97 for key social sectors have been increased manifold over the 1993 budget. The allocation for the health sector for the next fiscal year has gone up to 3,219 million rupees as against 329 million in 1993, representing almost a 10-fold increase. Similarly, the education sector has received a four-fold increase, going up to 1,625 million rupees in 1996 from 434 million in 1993. Allocations for two other important social sectors — population welfare and waterb — have been raised two and a half times. Population welfare has been allocated 2,000 million rupees, as against 829 million in 1993, and water sector has been given 16,061 million rupees as compared to an allocation of 6,681 million in 1993. The allocation for rural development has also been doubled from 558 million to 1,062 million rupees.

The cabinet noted that the federal budget for 1996-97 has given a number of concessions to low income people which have so far not been fully appreciated. Customs duty on imported milk has, in fact, been reduced from 35 percent to 25 percent, on yunani [indigenous] medicine from 65 percent to only 10 percent, on newsprint from 65 percent to 45 percent, on wood pulp from 15 percent to 10 percent, and on woven cloth from 25 percent to 10 percent. Similarly, cars up to 1,000 cc have been given total exemption from the levy of capital value tax. The government has also not levied any sales tax on food items.

Briefing newsmen about the deliberations of the cabinet, the federal minister for information and broadcasting, Mr. Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal, said it was incorrect to say that the agricultural sector has not been taxed. The provincial governments of Sindh and the NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] have already imposed tax on agricultural income, while the same was under consideration of the Punjab government. In addition, agricultural wealth tax has been streamlined by the federal government and raised to 400 rupees per PIU [expansion not known]. Moreover, only one farm house has been exempted from wealth tax and all other farm houses in excesses of one have been brought under wealth tax.

Pakistan: Government Body To Rectify Budget 'Anomalies'

BK2606054096 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 25 Jun 96 p 12

[Staff report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, June 24 — Realizing, at last, that there were anomalies in the Federal Budget for 1996-97, the government has constituted a Committee to rectify them. This was stated by the minister for information and broadcasting, Khalid Ahmad Khan Kharal while giving briefing to newsmen at the Parliament House Monday after meeting of the Federal Cabinet. The minister admitted that there were several anomalies in the budget.

However, the Cabinet meeting presided over by the prime minister noted with satisfaction that "the budget envisages 'manifold' increase in development allocations for 'key social sectors' and found solace in nothing that the 'budget has given a number of concessions to low income people which have so far not been fully appreciated'".

It noted that allocation for the health sector has gone up to Rs [rupees] 3219 million as against Rs329 million in 1993, representing almost ten-fold increase. Similarly, the education sector has received four-fold increase, population welfare two-and-half times increase and over two times for water sector. Allocation for rural development has also been double.

The Cabinet was informed that in order to meet the deficit of Rs142 billion in the budget, the government proposes to raise Rs63 billion from non-bank borrowings, Rs18 billion from external net receipts and Rs20 billion through bank borrowings. The remaining Rs41 billion are proposed to be raised through additional taxation. However, if the government had not imposed additional taxation and had it tried to raise another Rs41 billion through bank borrowings, the inflation rate would have jumped to 22%. But with a view to keeping the inflation rate at around 10%, the government opted for the bold measure of imposing new taxation, the meeting observed.

The Cabinet also "claimed that it was incorrect to say that the agriculture sector has not been taxed and pointed out that the provincial governments of Sindh and NWFP [North-West Frontier Province] have already imposed tax on agricultural income while the matter is under consideration of the Punjab government. In addition, agricultural wealth tax has been streamlined by the Federal Government and raised to Rs400 per PIU [Produce Index Unit]. Moreover, only one farm house has been exempted from wealth tax. Referring to

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what it called relief given to the low income people, the Cabinet noted that custom duty on items like milk has been reduced from 35 to 25%; on Unani medicine from 65 to 10%; on newsprint from 65 to 45%; on wood pulp from 15 to 10%; and on worn clothing from 25 to 10%. Similarly, cars up to 1,000 cc have been given total exemption from the levy of Capital Value Tax. The government has not levied any sales tax on food items.

The Cabinet approved introduction of an important piece of legislation in the parliament which would be known as "The Anti-Qabza Group Bill". It was felt that there was a dire need for such law, as with an escalation in land price, the land grabbers, commonly known as "Qabza Group", have become very active. The Bill provides that all cases involving land grabbing shall be heard by the Sessions Court and disposed of expeditiously. The Cabinet decided to withdraw the bill moved in the National Assembly to convert the Pakistan Postal Services Corporation Ordinance into an Act, thus reverting Pakistan Post Office to the status of an attached department.

The decision has been taken in pursuance of the government's effort to cut down the size of and expenditure on bureaucracy.

The Cabinet approved a scheme to computerize ID cards on national scale. The scheme which envisages computerized citizen slate base will be implemented with the help of IBM on Build, Operate, Transfer (BOT) basis.

The Cabinet reviewed the Apna Ghar project which envisages setting up of Apna Ghar at each divisional headquarters for poor and destitute. The project would cost about Rs496 million without any foreign exchange component. It would be completed over a period of three years.

Reviewing progress of Convention Center, the Cabinet was informed that 40% of construction work of the Monument in commemoration of the 50th anniversary of Pakistan's Independence has been completed. The Cabinet expressed its satisfaction at the up-to-mark pace of progress so far.

The Cabinet ratified the agreement on Promotion and Protection of Investments signed between Pakistan and Syria during the prime minister's visit to Syria in April this year. The agreement will protect and boost up investment activities in both countries by creating the appropriate investment climate for investors. Cabinet also accorded expose facto approval to the Cooperation Agreement in the Security Fields between Syria and Pakistan which envisages cooperation in combating terrorism.

Pakistan: 'Key Players' Resist Mirage Deal Review

BK2106014096 Islamabad THE NATION in English 20 Jun 96 pp 1, 15

[Report by Ahmed Rashid]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] ISLAMABAD—President Farooq Leghari would like to hold a review of the intentions of the government to purchase 32 Mirage 2000-5 fighter aircraft at a cost of US 4 billion dollars. However, a review, which is strongly backed by the Army, is also being strongly resisted by several key players in the government including members of the Prime Minister's office, the Defense Secretary and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A decision on this controversial issue, which continues to divide the military and political establishment will have to await the next meeting of the DCC [Defense Committee of the Cabinet] next month. The cost of the deal which was initially billed at US 3.2 billion dollars has now risen to US $4 billion which would make it the single biggest military deal in Pakistan's history. Each plane would cost US $90 million.

"The President has studied the Mirage proposal very closely in all its technical and financial aspects and is inclined to want to review the proposal as a whole," said a source close to the Presidency. "However no review can take place until the next meeting of the Defense Committee of the Cabinet (DCC) which will be held in the first week of July," he added. The President is reported to have spent several weeks studying all the relevant documents related to national security, financing and technical aspects of the Mirage case. Any review of the deal ordered by the DCC would be understood by the French as a rejection by Pakistan to buy the planes.

Meanwhile, military officials said that at the Corps Commanders meeting on Sunday, there was a unanimous verdict by the Army's high command to request a review of the Mirage proposal. By throwing their weight behind the need for a review, the Corps Commanders, the highest level of decision-making within the military, have made their intentions clear that they see the acquisition of the Mirages as not having any benefit to Pakistan's overall national security nor are the planes an absolute necessity for the defense of the country's borders. Traditionally any unanimous decision by the Corps Commanders carries considerable weight with the other two services, the Defense Ministry and political leaders. Sources said the army is adamant that a review be ordered and that the "Army and the President see eye to eye on this one".

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In recent weeks, the Army has taken the lead in demanding a review, while, it is also being strongly backed by senior officers in the Air Force, who are deeply disturbed by the implications of the deal—both technical and financial. Senior Air Force officers are also insisting that the Shaheen Foundation pull out of the controversial involvement of the Foundation's 5 per cent stake in a pay TV company in Karachi. Air Chief, Air Chief Marshal Abbas Khattak has still not made his views known, although he has been an adamant supporter of the deal in the past despite protests from his senior officers. Both civil and military sources said that the Mirage deal has been an important point of discussion in recent meetings amongst the troika as well as in a series of meetings between the Defense Ministry and the armed forces.

However, there is still considerable resistance to ordering a review of the deal coming from the office of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, the Defense Ministry and the Defense Secretary Saleem Abbas Gilani. Their arguments are based on the fact that in 1993, the DCC had given the go ahead to open negotiations with the French company, Dessault for the purchase of the Mirages. At that time, the Air Force was headed by Air Chief Marshal Farooq Feroze Khan, now Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (JCSC) and the Army by General Waheed. Sources said the JCSC is still not supportive of a review because he was part of the initial decision to go ahead with the negotiations.

Sources close to the Defense Ministry said that the Defense Secretary and his Ministry has told the Army that if a review on the Mirages was ordered, then the Defense Ministry may have to order a review of all upcoming Army purchases including the Army's intentions to buy 600 T-80 Russian-made tanks from Ukraine. The Army has apparently replied that it would be willing to undergo any review of any arms purchases it was considering. Senior officials in the Defense Ministry are also divided on the issue with most serving military officers in favor of a review.

Meanwhile, Western diplomats said that at the heart of the issue is the overly large commission that Pakistani middle men can be expected to earn if the deal was to go through.

Diplomats said that the commission is expected to touch an unprecedented 5 per cent of US $200 million. For most arms purchases, a commission rate of around 2-3 per cent is normal and that too is staggered as the weapons are delivered over a number of years. However, in the Mirage deal, in which deliveries and payments would carry on until the year 2009, there is a strong suspicion amongst foreign diplomats that most of the commission may be, paid as early as possible. The Mirage deal, its implications for Pakistan's economy, military and possible political repercussions because of the commission issue, has become a major subject of discussion and debate in Islamabad's foreign diplomatic community. No unnoticed is the fact that the maker of the Mirage, Serge Dessault is facing corruption charges in Belgium.

Over the next few weeks and before the next DCC meeting, considerable pressure is expected be build from those in the DCC who support a review upon those who do not. The blockers to a review are under tremendous pressure from the pushers for a re view to change their minds. Equally critical to the deal is the deep economic crisis that Pakistan faces, whether the IMF will be willing to release the third tranche of its US $600 million standby loan to Pakistan and the political turmoil being generated by the harshness of the budget and the open war between the government and the judiciary.

Western finance officials said that if the IMF does not respond positively to the budget and halts or even further delays payments of the next tranche to Pakistan, it will be almost impossible for Pakistan to raise the necessary US $2 billion in financing from Western banks to pay for the Mirage deal. At the same time, the French Finance Ministry can be expected to give a resounding no to Pakistan's request for more than US $2 billion in French loans to buy the planes. Pakistan wants to raise more than half the money in loans from France, but the French Finance Ministry has been resisting the idea of such a loan.

The Mirage deal is, therefore, not a one of military purchase, but has already become a crucial element in the country's economic and political future and Islamabad's international economic credibility abroad. Those in favor of continuing the deal are increasingly having to face the big picture of the implications of going ahead with the deal. However, no step is expected to be taken until the DCC meets in July and until then both points of view are expected to be aired in continuing meetings between the concerned officials.

Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka: President Urges Public Rally To Foil 'Saboteurs'

BK2506021996 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jun 96

[Report by Pramod de Silva — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga on Sunday [23 June] urged the

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working masses not to fall prey to saboteurs bent on impeding the forward march of the nation.

"The time has come to say 'no' to strikes," President Kumaratunga declared at a public rally held in Mirigama.

The President identified three objectives that must be achieved before the nation could indulge in "entertaining the whims and fancies of a few who seek various demands for self-gain".

"First, the war must be won. Second, we have to develop the country. Third, we have to accelerate the drive to create employment," she said.

In a fervent appeal to the working class, she said: "The time has come to think what we can do for the country and not what the country can do for us. This is certainly not the time to put the entire nation in distress because some group or the other wants a Rs. [rupees] 100 salary allowance".

The people are ready to give a "fitting reply" to certain elements who aim to sabotage the programs of the government, she added.

"The main opposition party is trying to topple the government in connivance with a few corrupt elements who lead crippling strikes. I am sure more than 90 percent of workers are against strikes of this nature," the President observed.

The President reiterated that the government would not hesitate to take action against bureaucrats who obstruct the implementation of government policies and engage in corruption.

Referring to the North-East conflict, the president said the government had made vast strides in diminishing the strength of the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam].

"But I have made it clear that we are waging a war only against the LTTE and not against the Tamil people. We have to redress their genuine grievances. This is exactly the objective of the political package submitted by the government".

She reminded the gathering that the government has given an opportunity to all parties to express their views on the package. "But attempts are being made to introduce amendments which would negate the very purpose of the package. However, we welcome all constructive suggestions and are prepared to consider them carefully".

Sri Lanka: President Accuses 'Certain' Newspapers of Abusing Freedom

BK2506030796 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 25 Jun 96

[Report by Pramod de Silva — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] President Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga on Sunday [23 June] charged that certain Sunday newspapers were abusing to the extreme the very freedom granted to them by the present government.

"There is one Sunday English newspaper which really makes a mockery of free speech by publishing absolute falsehoods which are nearly obscene in content," President Kumaratunga told a public rally in Mirigama.

The editors of these scurrilous newspapers regularly meet opposition leaders to get advice on what to write and publish, she added.

She categorically denied that there were rifts within the People's Alliance [PA] as suggested by a Sunday English newspaper.

"This is a canard made up by this newspaper on the advice of our opponents".

"There are eight parties, which have diverse views, in the alliance. Moreover, the PA formed the government with a slender one seat majority — despite which we have governed the country for nearly two years," she said.

The President stressed her firm commitment to eradicate bribery and corruption and develop the country. "Because of my resolve to achieve these objectives, it is not only Prabhakaran who would like to see a world without me. Corrupt bureaucrats, rogue businessmen and those implicated in mass-scale murders during the last regime would also wish the same".

War, she said, should be no reason for the halting the development drive. The government possesses a clear economic vision. Although the government could not meet its target of 300,000 jobs so far, at least 200,000 have found jobs here and abroad.

Plans are afoot to provide additional employment opportunities through several ventures slated to open this year, including a Free Trade Zone at Mirigama and a number of high-tech industries.

She noted that areas such as Mirigama had seen little development during the last two decades. This discrepancy should be rectified.

"Perhaps the biggest victory of our government so far is the elimination of the fear-psychosis. Gone are the days

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when youths were burnt alive on tyre pyres. Gone are the days when the State terrorised the citizens. Now the people are free to live without fear and suspicion," the president observed.

Earlier, she laid the foundation stone for a laboratory building at the Maha Vidyalaya affiliated to the Mirigama Teacher Training College, inspected the Mirigama hospital and opened a CWE [cooperative wholesale establishment] supermarket.

Sri Lanka: Minister Affirms Search for 'Viable Political Solution'

BK2406013196 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 23 Jun 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prof. G.L. Peiris, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs and Deputy Minister of Finance and Planning last week reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the search for a viable political solution to the country's ethnic conflict. The Minister was speaking to the members of the Foreign Correspondents Association on the Economy and the impact of the conflict on Sri Lanka's development.

The Minister stressed that the nation could little afford the enormous sums of money expended on the war year after year and stated that the Government had decided to prosecute the war with all the resources, vigour and determination at its disposal so that the scourge of war could be eliminated.

However, he added, the war was only the initial part of the exercise. The war was being fought to achieve a limited objective. What would cement a peace hard won by the sacrifices of so many, was the implementation of the political solution that would address the legitimate political grievances of the people of the North.

The Minister explained the steps taken to achieve consensus in the Parliamentary Select Committee on the Constitution which is discussing the Government's devolution proposals. He stated that the Government was in the process of collating various proposals and suggestions it had received from political parties, NGOs [nongovernmental organizations], professional bodies and other organisations and individuals. He admitted that several reservations had been expressed but that the Government, though recognising the problems, had not capitulated before them. He said there is no dilution of the stated commitment of the Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga to the implementation of a viable and acceptable political solution.

He stated that the proposals of K.N. Choksy, MP to preserve the unitary character of the Constitution while guaranteeing wide devolution by amendment to Article 76 of the Constitution, would be studied by the Select Committee and stated that the paramount consideration of the Government was that there should be no vestige of doubt as to what was intended by Parliament if these provisions in the new Constitution ever came before the courts for interpretation.

Prof. Peiris stressed that it was equally necessary to convince the minorities and their representatives that this did not mean a change in the policy of the Government to ensure maximum possible devolution within the constraints of the unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty of Sri Lanka. He said the political environment was now suitable for the evolution of a solution based on consensus.

Sri Lanka: Foreign Ministry Sources Cited on Minister's India Visit

BK2406010996 Colombo SUNDAY OBSERVER in English 23 Jun 96

[Unattributed report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The new Indian government has offered help in the reconstruction of the war-ravaged city of Jaffna and is ready to send food supplies to the northern civilian population. This assurance was given to Foreign Affairs Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar whose two-day visit to New Delhi, for meetings with the new government of Indian Prime Minister Deve Gowda, ended on Saturday.

The offer of help was made personally by the Indian Prime Minister when Minister Kadirgamar held talks with him on Friday, according to Foreign Ministry sources. Mr. Kadirgamar was the first foreign leader to visit India since the United Front Government assumed office in Delhi.

In his meeting with the Indian Premier, the Foreign Minister explained in detail the programme drawn up by the Government for the rehabilitation of the North and the Sri Lankan appeal for aid from the world community.

Premier Deve Gowda assured the Foreign Minister of India's full support for the efforts to resolve the ethnic conflict. "The Indian Prime Minister wished the people of Sri Lanka well as they debated constitutional proposals intended to bring peace and security to all citizens of the country," Foreign Ministry sources said.

The Indian Premier also indicated that India would not extend any support to the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] and pointed out that all the United Front's constituent parties had supported the continued ban on

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the LTTE. Premier Gowda is also understood to have pointed out that this principle had been endorsed by Tamil Nadu's new Chief Minister Karunanidhi.

Sri Lanka: Foreign Minister Comments on India, Pakistan

BK2506144196 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 25 Jun 96

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Foreign Minister Lakshman Kadirgamar says that India is pleased in the manner in which the Sri Lankan Army was handling the situation in the north since Operation Riviresa I. Addressing newsmen yesterday following his visit to India, he said that India had expressed its satisfaction that there had been no outflow of refugees and unwarranted casualties. The minister said that his visit was aimed at extending goodwill to the new government of India. The then prime minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao, sent a special envoy to call on then prime minister when the PA [People's Alliance] government assumed office in 1994.

Minister Kadirgamar said that his visit was a reciprocation of the Indian government's gesture. He met Indian Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda; ministers of finance, industries, and external affairs; the leader of the opposition, Atal Behari Vajpayee; and Sonia Gandhi. He told journalists that he explained to the Indian ministers the ongoing rehabilitation program in the Jaffna Peninsula. Mr. Deve Gowda pledged his support for the program for providing food and essential items. Mr. Kadirgamar said that he was planning to visit Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and Karnataka soon.

Responding to a question on the India-Pakistan issue, the foreign minister said that Sri Lanka had not been requested to mediate. When the Pakistani foreign minister called on him and the president during a visit to Colombo recently, he had asked whether Sri Lanka could convey to the Indian Government an indication that Pakistan was very keen to resume talks once again. This has been fulfilled; however, he added that Sri Lanka had always taken the stand that problems between those two countries should be resolved bilaterally between themselves within the framework of the 1972 Simla Agreement.

Sri Lanka: Army Commander Vows To End Tiger 'Terrorism'

BK2606063196 Colombo DAILY NEWS in English 26 Jun 96

[LANKAPUVATH report — received via Internet]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Colombo, Tuesday [25 June] — Sri Lanka's security forces will continue to relentlessly prosecute the war against the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam]. The liberation of Jaffna was only the beginning of the end of Tiger Terrorism, Army commander Lieutenant-General Rohan Daluwatte said today.

He said the liberation of Jaffna by the security forces in operations Riviresa 'I', 'II' and 'III', was not the end, but the beginning of the end of the ruthless campaign of terror carried out by the LTTE during the last 14 years in which the rebels had killed over 10,000 civilians.

He said the security forces were at present engaged in consolidating security of the northern peninsula and protecting and helping resettle over 400,000 people who have returned to their homes after being chased out by the Tigers.

Lt.-General Daluwatte said that the security forces had to clear areas under LTTE control in the Wanni, where people were being forced to live under sub-human conditions at the point of the barrel of LTTE guns.

The army chief said that the security forces had been inspired by the nation to liberate Jaffna from the LTTE. He stressed that this support must necessarily be continued and sustained, for the security forces were fighting to ensure the independence of their motherland.

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